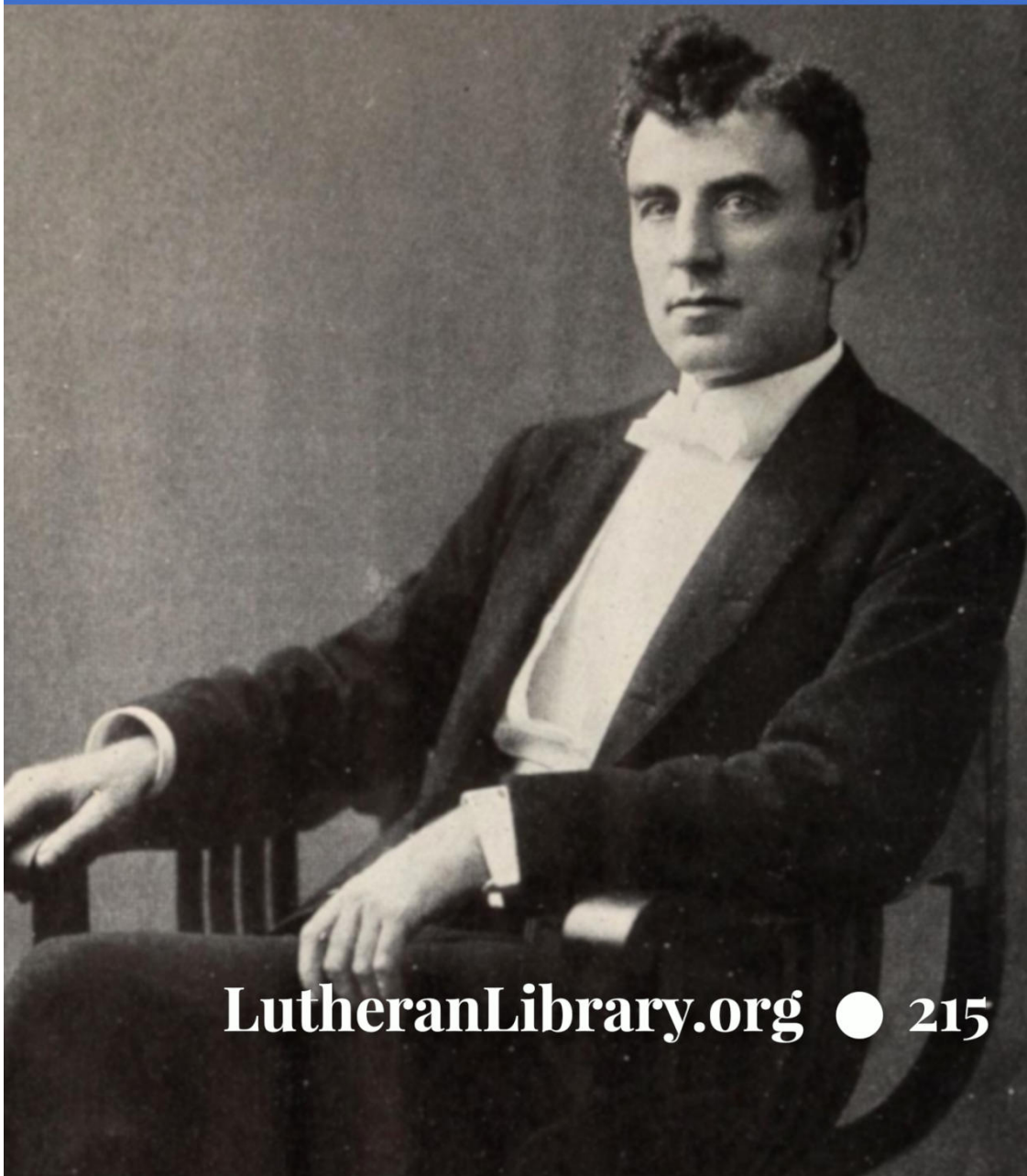


Simon Peter Long

The Eternal Epistle

Sermons on the Epistles for the Church Year



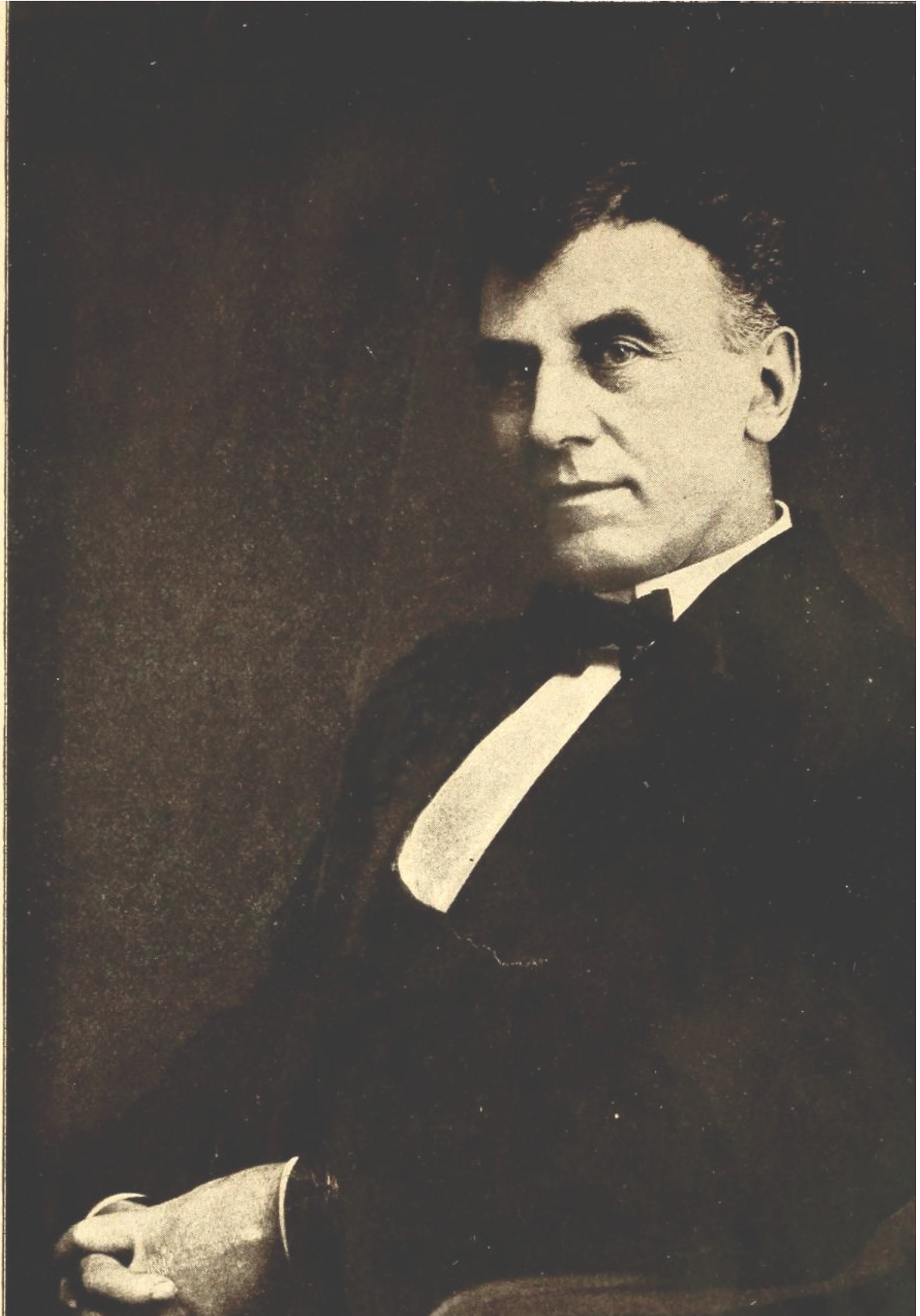
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The Eternal Epistle

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The Eternal Epistle
*Sermons on the Epistles for the
Church Year*

By Rev. Simon Peter Long, A.M.

PASTOR OF FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH, MANSFIELD, OHIO

With

Miss. Florence May Welty, Reporter

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“Oh God, give us a faith that will not waver, worry, whine nor wrangle, but a faith that will watch, work, wait, win and constantly warble Amen!”

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◇ Rev. Simon Peter Long

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How Can You Find Peace With God?

Preface.

“HEAVEN AND EARTH shall pass away, but My Word shall not pass away” said Jesus. The same Providence that preserved the Gospels for us will also preserve the Epistles. God’s Epistles are Eternal Epistles and the same Providence that called forth “The Great Gospel” has also prepared for the press by the same tongue and hand this volume of sermons for the Church Year. Like “The Great Gospel,” these sermons were delivered by a busy pastor to a large congregation from Sunday to Sunday and reported verbatim by his reporter who herself has left a lucrative position to prepare herself for a greater work for her Master. The author is so deeply impressed with God’s wonderful leading that he will quote for the comfort of others the following poem as a gem which will make at least one page of this book valuable:

SOMETIME.

Sometime, when all life’s lessons have been learned,
And sun and stars forevermore have set,
The things which our weak judgment here have spurned,
The things o’er which we grieved with lashes wet.
Will flash before us, out of life’s dark night.
As stars shine more in deeper tints of blue.
And we shall see how all God’s plans were right,
And how what seemed reproof was love most true.

And we shall see how, while we frown and sigh,
God’s plans go on as best for you and me;
How, when we called, He heeded not our cry,
Because His wisdom to the end could see.
And even as prudent parents disallow
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood.
So God, perhaps, is keeping from us now,
Life’s sweetest things, because it seemeth good.

And if, sometimes, commingled with life's wine.
We find the wormwood and rebel and shrink.
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine.
Pours out this potion for our lips to drink.
And if some friend we love is lying low,
Where human kisses cannot reach his face,
Oh, do not blame the loving Father so,
But wear your sorrow with obedient grace.

And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath
Is not the sweetest gift God sends His friend.
And that sometimes the sable pall of death
Conceals the fairest boon His love can send.
If we could push ajar the gates of life
And stand within, and all God's workings see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
And for each mystery would find a key.

But not today, then be content, poor heart!
God's plans, like lilies, pure and white unfold,
We must not tear the close shut leaves apart;
Time will reveal the hidden cups of gold.
And if, through patient toil, we reach the land
Where weary feet, with sandals loose, may rest,
Then we shall know and clearly understand –
I think that we shall say, "Our God knew best!"

M. R. SMITH.

Quoted by Bishop Huntington.

1. Knowing The Time. *Advent Sunday.*

And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof. Rom. 13:11-14.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Dear Christian Friends:

THERE IS NO QUESTION as to whom the letter to the Romans was addressed. It was addressed to the Christian people. We find in the first chapter the following words: "Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ; To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints; Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." The text then is addressed, not to heathen, but to Christians, and Christians are admonished to know the time, that it is high time to awake out of sleep. There are some things that we all know about time; we know what time is in general. There is not a man here this morning who has not some time or other said, I have not got time to do this or that. You know that today, when, it is past, is past forever. You know that tomorrow is not today until today is past forever.

You not only know what time is in general, but you also know the time of your own lives. You know how much time has passed from the day that you were born until today. I take it for granted that you know your own age.

Not only do we know the time of our own lives, but we know the time of the world. Whatever may have been the ages from the beginning to the first day, there is no question about the fact that as far as the people of this world are concerned, it was about four thousand years from the days of Adam to

the days of Christ, and that it is about two thousand years since Christ was born, and that now we are in the year One thousand, nine hundred and four, and every infidel in the world who wrote a letter this day has, by the very beginning of his letter, acknowledged that it is nineteen hundred and four years since Jesus Christ was born.

We know this about time, and the professed Christian, especially in the Lutheran Church, knows that it is the first Sunday in Advent. We know what time it is in the Church Year. We know that Christmas is coming, and that there is a preparation necessary in the hearts of men for the reception of Jesus Christ, the God-man, as well as it was necessary for them to cry out “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!” Our epistle of the morning admonishes us to know the time, and therefore I shall take for my theme:

Knowing The Time

I. It's Time to Awake

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” We have before us here the picture of a father in the home, early in the morning, going to the stairway and calling the children and saying for the last time. It is high time that you all get up, awake, arise, dress and go to work. The Apostle Paul writes many of his letters with pictures of the household, or of the army, or of the arena before him. We have here a picture, I say, of the household, of the good house-father admonishing everybody to get up soon and go to work, for the night is spent and the day is at hand. Knowing the time then, it is high time to awake; *for the Christian; for the heathen.*

1. Addressed to Christians

I said a moment ago that this whole epistle, was addressed to Christians. “Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” But when we believe in Christ is our salvation not as near as it ever can come? Isn't a man saved when he believes on Christ? And if he is saved, how can his salvation come any nearer? The moment I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him

as my personal Savior, I am a saved man, but, my friends, I am today one-third of a century nearer to the Jordan, nearer to the crown, nearer to the judgment, than I was when I first believed; consequently it is high time for the Christian to awake out of sleep. And was this admonition of the Apostle Paul unnecessary? Is the Church of God asleep? It is only too true, my friends, that too many ministers of the Gospel, and too many churches, are really asleep, like the children in bed in the morning; there are too many churches perfectly satisfied with their rest, perfectly satisfied with their sweet sleep, waiting just a little longer, for a little more sleep, and wishing that the call might cease for a moment. Oh, it is so nice to lie a while yet on these cold mornings in a good warm bed! And there you have the picture of the Church of God, letting the family sleep on, – father no Christian – possibly mother no Christian – possibly the children not Christians; professed Christians themselves not growing at all in knowledge, knowing nothing more about the Bible than they did twenty-five years ago; no spiritual development, no activity, sleeping, and sleeping, and sleeping, and Paul says to the Church of God, It is time, high time, that you awake out of sleep. It is high time for the professed Christians to discover the difference between having their names on the church book, and having their names in the Book of Life. It is high time that the Church of God knows the difference between hearing God’s Word Sunday after Sunday, and growing in grace, and sitting at home and grumbling about the church, sitting at home and making plans with the children of the devil to carry on the work of the world. It is time, high time that the Church of God discover the wonderful difference between mocking at the means of grace, and making use of them; and so I say this morning, in the name of my God, it is high time that the Church of God itself awakes out of sleep.

2. Address to Non-Christians

Not only is this true of the Church of God, but it is doubly true with regard to those who are no Christians. One of the things that seems impossible to me is this, that a man should live in a Christian land like America, with Bibles by the thousand, hymns of praise on every tongue, churches of God in every community, the light from heaven forcing itself into every avenue, conscience enlightened despite the darkness, and living right on as if there were no God in heaven, living right on as if the story of Christ on Calvary

were a mockery, living right on as if there were thousands of years of time for all poor mortals to be converted to God, putting off from day to day the salvation of an immortal soul, worth more than all the world, on account of a little business, a little money, a little dirt, a little fun. The question, my friends, that I cannot solve, is how any man with an ounce of brain left, can go on to perdition in spite of mother's prayers, and all the Christian prayers and the earnest admonitions, and the cry from heaven, and the soul's cry, and immortality stamped on his very image. Consequently I say again, it is high time that every man on earth awake from his sleep of lethargy and of lost condition and arise in the name of Christ his only Savior.

II. Time to Get Up

Not only is it time to awake, but it is time to get up.

1. The night is far spent, the day is at hand.

The Apostle Paul, looking out into the world, sees that now it is twilight, just the moment that the morning star is going down and the light of the sun is appearing in the eastern horizon. We might well say that from the days of Adam and Eve to the days of Christ it was night; we might well say that when that star came from the east, and Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the morning came; we might well say that in the days of the apostles there went a cry out into the world such as there never was before, and there never can be a greater by the same number of men, It is high time to awake out of sleep for the night is far spent and the day is at hand! And as the cry could go out for the world at large, it can go out to each individual this morning: The night of sin is far spent; the night of an infidelic heart is almost past; the night of your life is growing long and the morning hour is approaching; the night of your darkness and sinfulness is all in the past, and now the light of God's Holy Word, the light of the Gospel, the light of a Christian life, is all around you; the light of Christian prayers calling to heaven; the providential hand moving faster and faster in history; all this admonishes you to get up and arise from your sleep. The night is far spent; the day is at hand. The Bible is complete; the redemption is finished; death has been conquered; the Church has become a mighty power on earth; Christian

literature is flooding the world; the Gospel sun is shining; it is time to get up!

III. Get Dressed

And when we do arise, what is the next thing to do? To dress. *“Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light.”*

1. Children Rising

We have here the picture then of the children rising in the morning: The first thing is to pull off that night robe; the next thing is to put on the garments for the day. And so the Apostle Paul pictures before the world, the people of God, that they also should cast off the works of darkness and they should put on the armor of light. And do you want to know what these works of darkness are? “Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.” And if you want to know more about the garments you are to pull off, we will read what we learn in Gal. 5: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like, of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” My dear friends, you cannot sit here this morning and sleep when God’s Holy Word is holding forth to you the very marks of the garment that never can enter into the kingdom of heaven. And how many people there are today yet, professed Christians, that seem to boast of these very garments here mentioned. “Rioting” – how many professed Christians are engaged in riots today? “Drunkenness” – how many professed Christians today own the very buildings in which these damnable saloons are carrying on their work, and it is just as bad to own the building and rent it for such purposes as it is to run the business. How many professed Christians there are today who go in and stand by the bar by the side of those leading ungodly lives, leading others who care nothing for Christ, and for the church, and for their souls,

day by day on the path of destruction. As we heard this morning in our Sunday School lesson, the curse that rested upon Jerusalem was caused by the priests in their drunken sprees. If the priests themselves were drunken, what could you expect of the people? If ministers of the Gospel in this enlightened age think of starting such saloons as were started in New York by a great bishop of a great church, is it any wonder that the church members themselves stand there and feel satisfied? If the ministers of the Gospel, and the Sunday School teachers, and the councils of the churches, and the leading people of the city are going to go into these places, is it any wonder that the young boys are anxious for the day to come when they are allowed to go in and get a glass of beer without being refused? Is it any wonder that these boys are brought home dead drunk? Is it any wonder that Christian families are put to shame as they are? My friends, you cannot wear these garments and go on and dress as God would have you dress.

“Not in chambering and wantonness.”

I am informed that there are men who call themselves Christians, who are not at home, where they ought to be at night. Where are they? Where are they? Chambering – and you know what the word “chambering” means. Every man must so live as under the eye of God, and whether he knows it or not, God’s eye is upon him, and the man that, lives in adultery or fornication cannot get to heaven any more than the devil himself can.

“Not in strife and envying.”

How many professed Christians there are who seem to think it is big to be at strife with somebody, to be quarreling here, and quarreling there, and stirring up strife here and there; and just as sure as I find the spirit in my heart to want to make trouble with every man and woman I meet, just so sure I have got a garment on that must be pulled off before I can go to heaven. Oh, it is high time to awake; to get up; to undress in order that we may dress. When we run through this catalogue of sins we come to envying. Oh, that green-eyed monster, jealousy! which no one will acknowledge, and those having it, act so dumb. May God in heaven help us to get rid of envying and jealousy. It is that which has ruined many a man in business; it

is that which has ruined many a man in the church; it is that which makes people blind to their own soul's eternal good; it is that which is ruining our immortal souls. The devil never accomplished anything greater in all the world than when he hatched out jealousy and put it into the heart of Cain, and from that time on to this the mark has been borne. I do not know what mark it was that God put on Cain, but He did mark him; whether it was a black skin or not I do not know; but there is one mark that Cain had that a great many people are carrying, and that is the mark of envy, the mark of jealousy, that moved him to raise the club to kill his good brother Abel, and if you have that mark about you, the only reason you have not murdered is because you have not had the opportunity. Pull off the garment of darkness; pull off your garment of adultery; of fornication; of uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like, for remember it is God who says, through His inspired writer, "Of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Pull off this old garment of sin, with all its works of the flesh.

2. The Armor of Light

Let us put on the right garment, the whole armor of God, and let us put on the armor of light.

"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."

And if we want to know what that particular garment is that we are to wear, let us read again from Gal. 5: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." If you put on Christ then you will live in the spirit, and if you live in the Spirit, you must have in your heart love, you must be happy, you must seek peace, you must have patience, you must be gentle, you must develop that beautiful attribute, goodness, you must have meekness, and you must be temperate: against such there is no law.

Now, my dear friends, I ask you the question this morning, have you risen up from your sleep? Did you awake? And if you did awake and have pulled off the garment of darkness, have you put on the armor of light? Are you walking in Christ Jesus? Are you so living as you would wish to live if Jesus Christ were all around you and you in Him? If He is the vine and we are the branches, and if we can do nothing without Him, how else can we go on and dress for the higher life, if we do not walk as in His presence and in His sight?

IV. The Last Call

Then, when the children are awake, and have risen, and have dressed themselves, the last call comes: “Let us walk honestly, as in the day.” – in other words, let us go to work. knowing the time, it is high time that we all go to work, *early in the day and keep at it all day.*

1. Let us walk honestly, as in the day.

A great writer has said: “I want to so live as if my house had no window blinds, and my heart itself were surrounded by glass, and Jesus Christ were living inside.” Let us so live that God may understand us. The question is not at all how people may understand us, but let us so live that God may always understand us, and walk in His light as in the day. The thief usually does not make arrangements to go out in the morning, but after night. The sins of the world are mostly committed from the evening until the morning. The Apostle Paul tells us that in the Church of God we should walk as in the day. In other words, we should go to work and live honestly, and we should begin very early in the day and continue throughout the day.

That leads me to this important fact, that if the Church of God shall prosper on earth, we must give our attention to the little children. The Lord has taught us this so particularly again in the morning’s Sunday School lesson. You will remember that Isaiah found Israel sunken as low as it possibly could on account of intemperance; you will remember that God Himself said of Jerusalem that there is only one hope for that city, and that is to take the children from the laps of their mothers – from the breasts of their mothers, to use the words of Scripture. You will remember the little

children of Israel were kept on their mother's laps until they were three years old. Now, says God, the only hope for that great city is not these old drunken sots any more; the only hope is not those whose consciences have become seared; the only hope for Jerusalem is to take hold of the little infants, take them from their mothers' breasts, take them from their parents' knees, and lay line upon line, precept upon precept, line upon line, precept upon precept, until they shall become the men and the women of God's eternal city. Oh, dear friends, the Protestant Church has not aroused itself to the importance of educating these children as the Romish Church has. If the Church of Rome, sitting on her seven black hills, can train her children for ten and twelve years to die Roman Catholics, no difference where they go, what could not the Protestant Church do, if she would educate her children as she could? I am by no means satisfied with simply a Sunday School. I believe that when the conscience of the Christian Church is aroused to the awful situation in some of our public schools, to the fact that the old Bible is not allowed any more in the very schools that were born out of the Bible, when we understand the awful power of sin in our youth, when we understand then the little seed of thirty minutes in a week, and sometimes not even that, then, my friends, we ought to arouse to the importance of having a kindergarten in every church where the little children can learn God's Word every day for the first ten or twelve years of their lives; and I hope the time will come when the Protestant Church all over this land will say to the public schools, you shall educate our children after we have God's hand on their hearts ten years, and no sooner. Why are we not doing it now? The only reason is that we are afraid to reach into our pockets and spend a dollar or two for the souls of our children. Let us begin early in the day to walk in God's paths.

2. Continue As Long As It Is Day

And when we thus begin early with our children and train them as they ought to be trained, then let us continue as long as it is day.

There are some people who seem to think the right way to live is to serve the devil until just a few weeks or months before they die, and then hurry and prepare to meet God. I am glad that the Lord Jesus Christ is willing to save souls in the last moment, but I, for my part, would be very sorry, if my last thoughts in this world were like this, that here I am on my

bed, and I am going to die in a few days, and all my life I have spent trying to drive other people to hell. I should think it a terrible thing in that hour to remember that God's grace and mercy had been following me all through life, and I never listened to Him until just now. It would be a terrible thought for me to think that I haven't a single day in all my life left to do good. It would be a terrible thing to let the impression go out among other young men that they, too, shall prepare to meet their God when they are about forty or fifty years old, and many will never reach twenty, and will be lost forever.

It is high time that we awake out of sleep; that we get up; that we pull off the old garment of sin and put on the armor of light; it is high time that we go to work early in life and work on throughout life, every day, until we breathe our last breath. My friends, life is too short to quit working in the vineyard of our God, and let me speak a word of admonition to the aged people: You have only got a few more years to toil, only a few more steps to take, only a few words to admonish your fellowmen, only a few more days before you. Oh, work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work.

It was in the year 354, in Africa, that a mother gave birth to a son for whom she had prayed long before he was born, and prayed earnestly for him after he was born. Mother Monica was one of the great women of the fourth century. Her soul's desire was to give to the world a great man of God. For him she prayed, I say, long before he was born, and when he was born, she prayed for him while he was nursing at her breast; she prayed for him as she led him on the paths of life; she prayed for him in his daily work. There was given to that boy a wonderful brain, a great imagination, a power for good or for evil. That boy at the age of about eighteen had gone so deep into sin that the world thought there was no hope for him any more; that boy had gone into the philosophy of the world and forsaken his mother's prayers and forsaken her admonitions and instructions, and there was nothing too bad for Aurelius Augustine to do. He went on from bad to worse, while his poor mother was praying God never to let that boy get away from Him. Like a fish in the waters, having taken a bite of the hook, he swam up and down the waves but could not get away from the great truths that the mother planted into him. He went on to Rome, and from Rome to Carthage, and from Carthage to Milan, and there accidentally he heard the great Ambrosius delivering one of those great sermons of the

fourth century his conscience was awakened; he was led back to his mother's prayers and to his mother's God. He tried to shake off the impression and went out with a friend of his, trying to plunge into sin deeper and deeper. One day an officer came to those two young men and told them how the Gospel preached by Ambrosius was saving hundreds and thousands of young men from death and destruction, and the conscience of Aurelius Augustine was awakened more than ever. Becoming uneasy and trembling he said to his friend, "Come out and let us go into the garden;" there he stood, face to face with the young man who, steed like, had been galloping with him down the pavement of hell. He said, "The poor, and the afflicted, and the weak-minded, are coming into the kingdom of God, and you and I, with brain and education, are going to damnation, and it is time that we repent." Those two men stood face to face and trembled until Aurelius Augustine said: "I can stand it no longer," and went down into that garden under a fig tree; he lay there like his Master of old, and sweat as it were drops of blood; lying there he said, "Oh God, what shall I do? How can I get away from Thee and from my mother's prayers? O my God, when shall I be delivered of this burden and curse that rests upon me? Others have sinned ignorantly, and I knew better. Others have sinned, born of wicked mothers, and I have sinned against the prayers of the most Godly mother of the age. O God, will there be any hope for me tomorrow? O God, will there be any hope for me today? O God, will there be any hope for me now? And he heard a voice, and it was like the voice of a child, saying,"Arise, arise, and read." He listened to that voice, and he remembered that back there somewhere was the Testament that his mother made him promise to carry though he went to hell. He went back to the old Book, and for the first time in years opened it, and his eyes fell on these words: "Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ;" he said, "I will put Him on," and Saint Augustine became a saved man, and Mother Monica gave to the world the greatest man that lived since the days of the apostles, one of the greatest men that kindled the fire of a Doctor Luther, as the man that stirred up the Reformation of the sixteenth century, and that today has brought about the great theologians of the world, written in the apostle's letters as found in the book of Romans; and now may this admonition this morning move some

one who has heard my voice to awake, to arise, to dress, and to walk as in the day, for the night cometh when no man can labor. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for this blessing of proclaiming Thy eternal truth; we thank Thee that these epistles are the inspired Word of God, and we thank Thee that we are permitted to preach sermons on sermons by Thine apostles. We pray Thee, O God, that Thou wilt spare our life to finish this course of sermons on these great letters of the Holy Spirit; and we pray Thee, our heavenly Father, that Thou wilt enable those that are here this morning to follow this course of sermons as found in Thy Word throughout the year, and as one by one Thou mayst call some of them hence, do Thou help that these messages which they have heard may fit them the better for Thy kingdom. We ask Thee that Thou wilt give us Thy Holy Spirit to enlighten us and keep us close to the Master, that we may put on His garment of righteousness and accept it by faith. Heavenly Father go with us now throughout this coming week, and throughout the balance of life, and may we all heed the admonition given to our conscience. We pray Thee that Thou wilt give us many mothers like Monica, who shall pray for their children, and shall not give them up, but take them to the throne of God by daily prayer. We pray Thee, heavenly Father, that Thou wilt help the Church of God to arouse from her sleep and to take the little children early in the morning and place them in Thy vineyard; and we pray Thee that Thou wilt spare the lives of old hardened sinners until they see the way to come back to Thee. We know, O God, how stubborn the natural man is; we know how hard it is for those who have been in the way of sin so long to come to Thee; but what is hard for us is easy for Thee; and therefore we pray Thee to reach out Thine almighty hand of mercy and take hold of the hearts of stone and crush them and make hearts of flesh, and give them new life in Christ Jesus. All these favors we ask in the name of the blessed Savior, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For

Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.
Amen.

2. The Power Of The Holy Ghost. *Second Sunday In Advent.*

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus. That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God. Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to Thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy name. And again He saith. Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud Him, all ye people. And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles trust. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. Rom. 15:4-13.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THE LORD JESUS, just before He departed from this world, said: “All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth.” From these words we learn that power belongs preeminently and entirely to God, and the very fact that He acknowledged that this power was given to Him, gives the same power to God the Father. God the Father and God the Son had all power, but remember, this declaration was made in order to give strength to the command that followed: “Go ye into all the world, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” and in that last phrase you find that equally with the two persons of God – the Father and the Son – power belongs to the Holy

Ghost. This evening then I desire to call your attention to this power as mentioned in the last words of our text:

The Power Of The Holy Ghost

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.” The power of the Holy Ghost, as we find it in this text, gives us:

- I. One manuscript.
- II. One mind.
- III. One mouth.
- IV. One minister.
- V. One measure.

I. Our attention is called here to one manuscript.

“For whatsoever things are written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”

The manuscript therefore that the Holy Spirit has given us is the Book which I hold in my hand, the writings of old, the Holy Scriptures, to which the apostle refers when he say, “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me.” Did you ever stop to think that this one Book itself is a demonstration of the mighty power of the Holy Spirit? – a Book that was written in a period of fifteen hundred years – a Book that has sixty-six books in it – a Book that has been held down and burned by emperors and kings – a Book which has been forbidden to the people – a Book which has been destroyed time and again, and yet, like the adamant cube of old, whenever it was upset, came down right side up? This Book itself is a demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit. There is more power in that Book than there is in creation; there is more power in that Book than there is in the resurrection of the dead.

1. Creation

I speak of creation first, because the Holy Spirit took part in that work.

We confess in the creed: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; but thereby we do not exclude Jesus Christ nor the Holy Spirit, just as we do not exclude the Father and the Holy Spirit from redemption, and just as we do not exclude the Father and the Son from sanctification. When we read the first verses of the Bible we find that God created the heavens and the earth, and the Spirit dwelt upon the face of the waters. In other words, this whole creation was like chaos and would never have been in the order in which we find it this morning, had it not been for the mighty power of the Holy Ghost.

2. The Resurrection

And when we read of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we find sometimes the Bible says that the Father raised Him from the dead; We find that Jesus Christ says: I have power to give My life, and to take it again; then we read again that He was quickened by the Holy Spirit. If you could have gone down into the tomb where Jesus lay during those three days of His death, you would have found His body cold and lifeless; if you could have placed your hand on the forehead that had been wearing the crown of thorns, you would have felt death there; if you could have placed your hand on that breast in which beat that loving heart, you would have found a gash there, cold in death; if you could have placed your hands on His feet, you would have found the marks where the nails were driven; that whole body was lying there stiff and cold, and you would have said. There is no power outside of God Almighty that can raise Him up. the Holy Spirit quickens Him, and He conquers death and grinds his iron limbs to powder. There you get the power of the Holy Ghost, and we are assured that when Jesus Christ shall come in the clouds with all His holy angels, that the dead shall all rise by the same power that Jesus rose, and Jesus being raised by the power of the Holy Spirit, your body and mine shall rise by that power.

And yet, my friends, the power of the Holy Ghost in this world is just as great, or greater, than the power of resurrection; greater than the power of creation. If you are today a child of God, you are as much a new creation as the sun was when God said. Let there be a sun. The new heart within you has been created by the Holy Spirit in His Word. If you today are spiritually alive, you have had as much power in bringing you from spiritual death to

life as God used when He said. Let there be life, and there was life. The Word of God, then, is one manuscript which is the outward demonstration of the power of the Holy Ghost.

II. One Mind

Our text speaks not only of one manuscript, but also of one mind.

“Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus. That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1. The Power of the Holy Ghost

To be like-minded and to have one mind is the power of the Holy Ghost. What confusion there is in the minds of the people! There is an old couplet that says:

Many birds of many kinds;
Many men of many minds.

Wherever we go we find that each man has his own way of thinking, and this diversity of minds is found not only among the people of the world, it is found also among professed Christians. The Apostle Paul was writing this letter to Christians, as we heard last Sunday night, but among those Christians there were some of Jewish extraction, and some from the Gentiles, and these people could not be brought together to think alike on account of their former environments and circumstances. He calls attention to their different way of thinking and looking at things in a few verses of the previous chapter:

“For one believeth that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eateth herbs... I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.”

The people in the present day are just the same as they were then. One man thinks it is wrong to take a swallow of whiskey; the other thinks it is just right. One man thinks it is wrong to smoke; the other thinks it is just right to smoke. One thinks it is all wrong to eat this and that; and the other says it is just right to eat this and that. The Apostle Paul, speaking on that question says: "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean." If a man thinks it is wrong to chew tobacco, to him it is unclean; if he thinks it is wrong to smoke, to him it is wrong to smoke; if a man thinks it is wrong to take a swallow of wine, to him it is wrong, until he is convinced that that is right. In other words, as long as the world stands, even professed Christians are not going to agree on just exactly what you dare eat and what you dare not; or what you dare drink, and what you dare not. Nevertheless, though there is confusion among the people, the Holy Spirit has the power to give these people one mind.

This confusion lies not only in eating and drinking, but you will find it in other things. "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." The old Jews supposed the seventh day, the old Sabbath, was far better than any other day. The Gentiles thought one day was just as good as the other. The Gentiles learned from the Apostle Paul, what all Christians ought to know today, that one day is no better than the other. You do not find that Jesus Christ one day walked along with a long face, and the next day with another face; you do not find that one day He was worshiping the Father, and the next day not. The Lord Jesus Christ used one day just like the other, but He made every day a day in which to be about His Father's business. There are some people who seem to think that on the Lord's day they must walk around and look so holy, and then, from Monday morning to Saturday night, they look so devilish. My friends, it is better to be children of God every day. It is better to be just exactly on Monday and Tuesday, and Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, what you are on Sunday.

2. The Mind of Jesus Christ

Out of all this confusion the Holy Spirit has the power to bring one mind, and that one mind is the mind of Christ Jesus.

“Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus. That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

If the world is ever to have one mind, it is not to have the mind of a Luther, not the mind of a Calvin, not the mind of a Zwingli, not the mind of this man or of that, but it must have the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in Him only the Church of God can ever be united. It is in the power of the Holy Spirit to get men to think as Jesus thinks. It is in the power of the Holy Spirit to give us the minds to say, and to catch the hearts of men, and to catch their wills, by the powder of the Holy Ghost. The hearts of men are very slippery things, and they can very easily be caught sometimes by sinful offerings. We have just heard throughout the past week that even a banker’s heart can be caught by a Mrs. Chadwick. There are some people whose hearts can be very easily caught by some sinful proposition; but if you ever tried to catch the hearts of men and make Christians of them by human power, you have failed. If you have ever tried to take the wills of men and change them by your power, you have entirely failed. There never was a man in the history of the world that could ever make a Christian of a man that was none. We hear about men who travel from city to city converting men, and I never saw a man in my life that was converted by another man, who was not entirely perverted. There is only one power that can ever make a child of God out of a child of the devil, and that is the power of the Holy Ghost. That is the power that can take and catch the hearts of men; it is the power that can take the wills of men and turn them, in order that they may fall down and worship the Lord Jesus Christ. This, my friends, is the power of the Holy Spirit, the one mind.

III. One Voice

Not only do we find he has the power to give us one mind, but he has the power to give us one mouth.

“That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.”

When we study these two verses carefully we find out that the Holy Spirit has got the power to have us worship together, and welcome one another.

1. Worship together with one mouth.

We have as many mouths as we have faces, but there is one thing that the Holy Spirit can do: – He can help us all to confess the same faith; He can help us all to pray the same prayer; He can help us all to sing the same songs of praise. When, a few moments ago we all stood up and said, I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; when we all said: And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; when we all said: And in the Holy Ghost, it was as one mouth. Now, my friends' no man on earth can stand up and confess the Apostles' Creed unless he has been himself a miracle of the workings of the Holy Spirit. You do not find a Robert G. Ingersol standing up and saying, I believe in God the Father Almighty, as we confessed this morning. You do not find men who are not at heart Christians standing up and saying that unless they mean to be hypocrites. It is only by the power of the Holy Spirit that a man can get faith in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, and when we have got that faith, we all stand up and confess it, according to the great declaration: He that will not confess Me before men, I will not confess before My Father in heaven. Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God. And when we take up our hymns of praise and sing them, we do not one sing this verse and another that one, one this stanza and another that; we all say the same words at the same time, and the very angels of heaven listen for the voice that comes out of the First Lutheran church this evening, or any other church; it is the voice of one mouth, praising God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, by the power of the Holy Ghost. And so it is with prayer. The Lord did not teach the Lord's Prayer for the special purpose of simply showing a form. There are some people who seem to think that the Lord Jesus just gave that prayer as a model, and that, therefore, we do not need to pray it today. There are some people who seem to think that it will not do to have any forms in the Church of God. I would like to know if there is anything in the world that has any more form to it than this Bible; I would like to know if there is anything in the world that has more form than the Psalms; or the Lord's Prayer, or the benediction, when the Lord God not only said that we should

pronounce the blessing on the people, but said you should say: The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift His countenance upon thee and give thee peace. We have no right to change that form. The Lord Jesus Christ said: Go ye into all the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. What is that but form? What is grammar but form? What is diction but form? What is education but form? What are songs of praise but form? The real truth is that God gave us the Lord's Prayer in order that we might all come together and join mouth to mouth until every mouth shall be but one mouth, saying: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen. One mouth praying by the power of the Holy Ghost.

2. Welcoming Each Other

This same power gives us one mouth to welcome each other.

“Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.”

How did God receive us? Jesus Christ came down on earth and gave us His hand; but He gave us something else besides His hand, He gave us His Word, and that Word of His is this: The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Jesus Christ is the one Mediator between God and man – the man, Christ Jesus. Just as the Lord Jesus stretched out His hand and gave us His Word to bring us to the Father, just so He has given to us this Holy Spirit in order that we might have love to our fellow men, and this love should enable us to greet each other and give each other the hand, welcome each other, thereby showing that we have one mouth, that is, the mouth of a child of God.

IV. One Minister

The power of the Holy Spirit not only gives us one manuscript, one mind and one mouth, but also one minister.

“Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.”

The Apostle Paul here calls Jesus Christ the Minister. It was the Apostle Paul who said: I am determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Some ministers of the Gospel are doing more to show themselves than to show Jesus Christ to the world. The only man that will ever succeed in winning souls for Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit is the man that hides himself behind his Master, the one that will hold up Christ and preach Him to the world. Jesus Christ, crucified on Calvary, is the one Minister to the Jews; the one Minister to the Gentiles.

1. He is the only hope of the Jews.

Sometimes the members of the Jewish race are finding fault with me because I object to Protestants singing for them. I object to it, not because they are not as good people as we are, but I object to it because they officially and confessionally deny my Savior, Jesus Christ, and how any Protestant Christian on earth can stand up for two dollars and a half and help them along in a service to deny Christ, I cannot understand. I do not understand that it is any excuse for Judas Iscariot to reject Jesus because he got sixteen dollars, and I do not understand that it is any excuse for a Protestant Christian to stand lip and help people along in a work that denies the only Savior. It is absolutely wrong, and if Christians had any conscience left they would not do such a thing. “Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.” The Lord Jesus Christ Himself was a Jew; the Lord Jesus Christ Himself was circumcised; the Lord Jesus Christ Himself died for the Jews first of all, and then for the world, and there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby a Jew can be saved, except by the Lord Jesus Christ. God says in one place that if an angel from heaven came and proclaimed any other Gospel, that angel should be accursed, and if an angel should be accursed for holding up any other salvation, what shall befall the man that proclaims salvation without Jesus Christ. I declare,

therefore, before this audience this morning, and wish I could reach the ears of every Hebrew in the world, if he does not repent, of his sins and accept the Savior, there is absolutely no hope for his salvation. That is the Minister whom the power of the Holy Spirit proclaims to the world; and if all the ministers of the Gospel would stop patting the Jews on the back and telling them we are all going the same way, they would find out that there is another way, and that the only way – Christ and Him crucified.

2. A Minister for the Gentiles

This same Minister is not only a Minister for the Jews; He is a Minister for the Gentiles.

“And that the Gentiles might glorify God or His mercy; as it is written: For this cause I will confess to Thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy name. And again He saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles; with His people. And again. Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud Him, all ye people. And again, Esaias saith., There shall be a root of Jesse and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles trust.”

Here we find promise after promise out of the Word of God that this great Minister died for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews, and what a blessing it has been to you and me that the Gentiles did receive the Gospel. Are you aware of the fact that in the sixth and seventh centuries after Christ a missionary went out through Europe and there found our forefathers cutting each other's heads off with knives of stone? Are you aware that our own forefathers were heathen bowing down before stocks and stones? Had it not been for this minister by the power of the Holy Spirit that wrought in their hearts a faith, your fathers and mothers would not have been Christians, and God only knows where you and I would be this evening. Then let us not forget that we hold up to the world by the power of the Holy Ghost a Savior of the Jews and of the Gentiles, of the old and of the young, of big sinners and little sinners, a Savior of all.

V. One Measure

By the power of the Holy Ghost we notice not only the one Minister, but the one measure.

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

In this verse we find the promise of a measure that shall be filled up, and this measure is filled up not only for God, but through Him also for us.

1. Three Attributes of God

We find three beautiful attributes of God in this text. In one verse He calls Himself the God of patience and consolation, and in the last verse, the God of Hope.

The God of patience! Oh, how full of patience God is! He waited on Noah and the people of his day one hundred and twenty years to repent; He waited on the children of Israel in the days of Christ. Oh, what patience He had with those Pharisees and those Jews, until at last He was compelled to ring out that Woe, woe, unto you scribes and Pharisees! And what patience He has had with you and with me. When our little children do not obey when we tell them to do a thing, and they do not do it, we come with great authority and with the lash upon their backs; but Oh, how often God has called upon you to repent; how often He has told you to come and give your heart to Him; how often He has called after you with a voice of love and said, only a little longer and then you must do one thing or the other; but He has waited, and waited and waited, and He is waiting this morning yet, and the only reason you are not in hell right now is because God is full of patience; and this we learn by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Not only is He the God of patience, but the God of consolation. Where have you ever found your consolation? You say you have found it in the Word of God, but where do you find it in the Word of God? Only there where it holds up the God of patience and consolation. Oh, how consoling God is! When the dead are lying in our homes our neighbors come in and express their sympathy; they go out, and where is the consolation? But here comes God's Word: Let not your heart be troubled; ye 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. 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. There is consolation. Two years ago a young man was killed accidentally only fourteen miles from here. The

mother was broken-hearted. The text that was chosen for her son's funeral was the one I have just recited. She said on the day of the funeral, "I know there is consolation in that verse, but some how or other I cannot find the comfort." A few Sundays ago I had the honor of burying that mother, and in that Bible she had marked her son's text for herself. That mark told me a great deal. She found the consolation and was ready to go home to her son; and then I was compelled to take the same words and preach the consolation to her husband and to the rest of her children. I tell you, my friends, there is consolation in God, and in God only, and such a God the power of the Holy Ghost holds up to us.

Not only is He full of consolation, but He is the God of hope. If there is anything in the world that is hard for a man it is to reach that point where there is no hope any more. We have hope as long as there is life. No difference how sick we may be, or how much suffering, as long as we live we say there is hope. No difference how low some one has fallen, as long as he is still in this world and breathing we go after him and with the help of the Holy Spirit lift him up that we might bring him to the God of hope. There is only one place where there is no hope: "But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." There shall be no hope. But God is full of hope – the God of patience and consolation.

2. Fills us with...

And the God of hope by the power of the Holy Spirit comes to us and fills us with what? Joy, peace in believing and hope.

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost."

I ask young people sometimes why they do not become Christians, and they say, Well, we want to enjoy ourselves a while yet; we want to have real pleasure. Oh, that the poor boy and girl could once learn the great lesson that there is no joy outside of salvation! This thing of going to the theater for pleasure, where you sit down and hear ungodly things that may make you laugh for the moment, is it joy? Your immortal soul cries out: Oh, I need something better than that. In the hour of death you are not going to

think of Macbeth nor of Hamlet; in the hour of death you will not care whether you have Shakespeare under your pillow or not; in that hour you will want hope, peace, and joy, but this hope, and this peace, and this joy can only be found by the power of the Holy Ghost, and this can only be found through Him by believing in Christ Jesus. Thus we have His mind, and having His mind we have got this great measure, the filling up by the Holy Spirit.

Remember, my friends, in conclusion, that the work of the Holy Spirit is not yet finished. When Jesus Christ died on Calvary He cried out: It is finished. On the last great Judgment day the Holy Spirit will be there and He will remind you there of His work in this world, how He called, how He gathered, how He enlightened, how He sanctified and how He kept Christians. On that great day He will remind you of the fact that His work was not done here on earth. He will tell you how He went after you through a certain sermon that you heard; how He stirred up your conscience and stirred up your heart and told you to prepare to meet your God. He will call attention to the God of patience; He will call attention to the God of hope; He will call attention to the God of consolation. He will stand before you and remind you of the fact that He did plead with your conscience and with your soul; He will let you understand that He knows you better than you do yourself, and there will be no answer for you to give, except to stand there condemned, and the Holy Spirit will on that day say what Jesus said on Calvary. This morning the Comforter is among us, and the Holy Spirit is calling to every man, woman and child in the house to prepare to meet God, and He will keep on calling until the last hour. On that day, when the Judgment has come and the last assize on high has been held. He will stand before you, with the power of the Holy Ghost and cry out: It is finished! And then it will be finished forever with you. Oh, may God help you to realize that true joy, and true peace, and true happiness consists in this, that we are children of God; that Christ is our Savior; that day and night we trust in Him and Him only; that the seal is upon the covenant: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and that we never take the warning away as long as we live: He that believeth not, shall be damned. May the Holy Spirit by that quiet power from on high urge you all this evening to a higher Christian life, and may we be true to each other, and admonish each other in the path of rectitude and right until we shall stand before Him who said on

Calvary: It is finished; and Him who shall say in the last moment of the Judgment: It is now finished. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the power of the Holy Spirit, and we thank Thee that He comes to us through the Word, and the holy sacraments, and calls, and gathers, enlightens, sanctifies and keeps us; and we pray Thee, O God, that the power of the Holy Spirit may convince us all of sin. and of righteousness, and of judgment. We ask Thy special blessing this evening upon every soul in. this house. Bless the members of this church, the visitors who may be here from other churches. We pray Thee to bless those who may be visiting here from other cities, and every one who is not a child of God, help that he may not go out of this house without fully determining to accept Thee right now as his or her personal Savior. O Lord, demonstrate the power of Thy Holy Spirit in our own hearts and consciences in this hour. We pray Thee that Thou wilt give a special blessing to Thy Church on earth; Bless Thy truly called servants everywhere. Help that they may stand before the people as dying men pleading with dying man. We pray Thee, O God, that Thou wilt make us all diligent students of that manuscript, the Word of God, and thereby help us to have one mind, and that the mind of Christ Jesus; and O God, give us one mouth to confess Thee, one mouth to praise Thee, and one mouth to pray to Thee, when we say:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

3. Old Babes. *Third Sunday In Advent.*

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God. 1 Cor. 4:1-5.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH of the old covenant the little children were presented to their Lord and became members of the church at the age of eight days, and we find that in Israel there was no such a thing as a family having children who were not Israelites. It was God's plan from the beginning that Christian families should rear nothing but Christian children, and that this is still the spirit of the New Testament we heard in this morning's lesson. John the Baptist did not become a member of the church when he was a grown up man, or a young man, but he, too, was brought into the covenant of the circumcision at the age of eight days; was also filled with the Holy Spirit even before he was born. From this we learn that it is God's will in the New Testament dispensation that the little children can come into the Christian Church just as soon as they are born, and that they should have the Holy Spirit, at least in the hearts of their parents, long before they are born. There is nothing more beautiful to a true pastor than to see the little children in the church. Those people who do not want the children in the church are far from being true Christians, for God gave the command to feed the sheep and the lambs, and how can we feed the lambs

when we never see them? The way to train children is to bring them to the house of God no later than six weeks after they are born, and have them baptized, and the mothers come with those baptized children every Sunday that they are well enough; and a room should be provided where they could go with those children in case they do disturb the service; and, as soon as they are trained a few weeks, they can be in the service as well as any one else. I have said it often, and I repeat it tonight, I could take care of twenty-five little children in any church if I were permitted to sit near by, and those parents who cannot take care of their children in the church, are discovering not simply that they have not trained them rightly in the church, but they haven't trained them rightly at home. The little children should be brought into God's house, and if they were all brought in as they should be and trained there Sunday after Sunday, line upon line, precept upon precept, we would not have so many old babes in the church. Now the very people who do not love the little babes in the church are old babes, and the old babes are the hardest babes in the world to control. The apostle refers to these old babes in chapter 3:1 when he says: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." This letter was addressed to Greek Christians, living in Corinth – the most intelligent people who were living on God's earth at that time, but just because they were naturally intelligent they imagined in a very short time that they were theologians, and began to discuss questions concerning which they knew very little; factions arose, and the Apostle Paul was called upon to write them a letter in order that he might settle them and in order that they might not become too proud, he called them by their right name and said, You are a set of

Old Babies

You will notice my themes are in the Bible and not in the newspapers. These old babies are still found in the church, and you will notice we find them

- I. In the pew.
- II. In the pulpit.

I. The Old Babes I Say Are Sometimes Found In The Pew

You know them by three marks: *Creating factions; quarreling about the preachers; and posing as theologians* – making fools of themselves.

1. Creating Factions

We read of these old babes in the following words: 1 Cor. 1:10-11. “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.” In chapter 3:3 he says of them: “For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” In other words, you will notice that these people that caused disturbances and factions were not an ignorant set of people, nor does he say they were not Christian, but he does say they were yet carnally minded. In Corinth, as I said a moment ago, were the thinking people of the world, but that did not cease to make them people who would quarrel and try to bring up factions in the church. And it is so today yet. I heard one time of even a senator who, in order to disturb his pastor, brought his big dog into the church. I do not know whether that was true or not; some say it was, and some say it was a mistake. Be that as it may, intelligence alone is no sign that people will not try to make up factions. The real faction makers in the world are naturally intelligent people, because the dumbest people could not do those things.

Not only is it true that they are very intelligent, it is also true that they may be Christians. I would not for a single moment say a man is no Christian because he tries now and then to stir up a little faction in the church of God. The Apostle Paul gave credit to the Corinthians for being Christians. In addressing the letter to them he calls them saints; he calls them children of God in Christ Jesus; nevertheless he calls attention to the fact that though they are Christians they are very weak, little old babes, carnally minded. “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto

spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.” There are so many people who let the flesh rule instead of the spirit, and there is a great deal of flesh about all of us; there is a good deal of that envy and strife that we find recorded in this verse found in the hearts of all people, and unless we let the spirit of God reign instead of this evil spirit and flesh that is within us, we will always be more or less disturbing the people in the church and raising factions. I am not speaking tonight on this subject because I have sought a special text. You all know that these texts were selected long before I was born; you know that they are found in this order in your own hymnbook; and it is my duty, as a minister of the Gospel to explain these texts as we go along, fearless of any one’s feelings and fearless of any one’s criticism. I say then, giving credit to all people who may raise factions in the church, they may be Christians but oh, what weak little Christians they are! Old babes.

Not only is it true they may be Christians, but I say they are really carnally minded; the right power is not on top yet. When I ask the question. Are you jealous, the answer is invariably, No. You never saw a really jealous person in all your life acknowledge jealousy, yet you will find it in the hearts of nearly all people; and when that jealousy reigns and rules, it robs people of all decency, of all sense, and makes them do the dumbest things that can be done when they think it is very smart. The result is that it brings about little factions here and there, just as the Corinthians were all wrought up over small things that virtually amounted to nothing.

2. Quarrel About The Preacher

Another kind of babes in the pew are those that quarrel about the preacher. We read in the twelfth verse of the first chapter:

“Now this I say that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?”

Time and again in this epistle Paul calls attention to the fact that these factions in the Corinthian church were all the time quarreling about the preacher. There was one faction that said, Give us Paul, the little theologian, that little hero, that man that has made clear to us justification by faith, that

man so fearless that he fears neither man nor devil, that man though homely, and little, and stuttering, is filled with God's truth, and was converted on his way to Damascus, had the scales to fall from his eyes, arose and was born again, and now is a power in the world; give us Paul; none but Paul will do for our church. Then there were some who were not so much in favor of Paul; there were some who wanted a good looking preacher, a big man, a man who could make a good appearance, a man full of fire, a good speaker, a man who could carry his audience with him, and so some said. We do not want Paul, we want Cephas, or, in other words, Peter; we want the man willing to walk on the waters to go to his Savior; we want the man that plunged into the water to reach his Master; we want the man who, when he did make a mistake, repented and wept bitterly; we want the man that preached the sermon on the day of Pentecost; we want the man that brought thousands into the church in a single day. Then some said, No, we want Paul; and others said, Away with Paul, give us Peter. Then some arose in the church at Corinth and said. We are not very much in favor of Paul, and not very much in favor of Peter; we want a man that has got the intelligence and education of Paul, and the fire and eloquence of Peter; one who has the oratory and the diction of an Apollos; we want that great hero from the south, that great theologian and speaker who will overshadow Paul and Peter; we want the greatest preacher in the world – give us Apollos. Then another faction in that same church said, We have heard a great deal in our church lately about Paul, and we have heard a great deal about Peter, and we know the faction that would like to have Apollos, but we would like to have a little more Christ in our church. And that little faction was right, and the other three factions were wrong, and the Apostle Paul felt himself constrained to write not only for the correction of those that wanted Peter, or those that wanted Apollos, but also for the correction of those that were crying, Give us Paul! Give us Paul! He said. Was Paul crucified for you? Is Christ divided? Don't you all see that you are a set of old babes? Don't you all see that when you are striking at Paul, or at Peter, or at Apollos, you are hitting Christ in the face? I am afraid sometimes some of the members of the churches of Mansfield will find they are striking Jesus Christ instead of the preacher. You show me a church where there are factions quarreling and fighting, and you will find it is not the preacher that is suffering, it is Jesus Christ that is being wounded over again, and nailed to the cross again; and if people could see, as the Holy

Spirit is helping us tonight to see, that we should forget the man and listen to the message; forget that we are standing in the presence of flesh and blood, and remember that it is God Almighty with His Holy Spirit that uses men as miracles of grace to bring us one mind in Christ Jesus alone, you Would not find factions in any church on earth.

3. Pose As Theologians

These factions are wrought not only by those who love to create factions, and those who will quarrel about the different preachers, but they are wrought by a class of people who will pose as theologians when they are making themselves a set of fools. The apostle refers to those in the latter part of the third chapter when he says:

“Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men.”

I know of no more beautiful picture of the old babes in the church who try to pose as theologians and make themselves fools, than the very words I have just read. What do I mean? I mean simply this, that when a man has given his whole life to the study of theology, has given his whole life to the study of doctrine, and to the study of his own church, then to have some young man who works in the shops day after day, and never looks in his Bible from one end of the week to the other, to step up and try to teach that man theology, that one is an old babe and is making a fool of himself. How many churches there are where you find these same old babes sitting in the pews, never trying to study theology as they ought to, who do not know the doctrines of their own church or the doctrines of the Bible as they ought to, drawing the conclusion that they are right and all others wrong, trying to disturb the church and raising factions among the people. Let us be very careful that we do not remain ignorant of the doctrines of our church. And when I say that, I say it not only to this congregation as Lutherans, but I say it to you as members of your own church, if you belong somewhere else. There are too many Baptists in the present day who do not know the doctrines of the Baptist Church; there are too many Presbyterians who do

not know what is in the Confession; there are too many Methodists in the present day who never saw the discipline; there are too many Lutherans who absolutely do not know why there is a Lutheran Church, and the consequence is that those people, when they do hear an absolutely Lutheran sermon, are almost astonished and think it is wonderful and say we never heard such things before. There are some that not only do not know the doctrines of their church, but they do not know the doctrines of the Bible. The main thing after all is to know whether what the church teaches is in the Bible, and whether the things we believe in our church are the things the Holy Spirit wrote in this Book; and it we do not study the Bible and know exactly what the Holy Spirit said, how shall we ever know what the truth is? Therefore I say there are conclusions drawn by those who pose as theologians that are simply lies. It has come to me several times in the last month that I have been teaching that little babes not baptized go to hell, and it is a damnable lie; I do not care who tells it; I never said such a thing and everybody knows I never said such a thing. The great trouble is that there are some people will sit down and listen to something about half way, draw another half conclusion that is half a lie, and go and tell it for the truth. It is time we learn the difference between being a theologian and being simply a man that pretends to be wise and is a fool. I am not calling any man a fool; I do not know who said it, but somebody has been saying it, and what I ask of you to do, is to repent of your sins and to come and listen to the Holy Spirit, and not draw conclusions that were never given.

II. In The Pulpit

In order that you may know that I am not striking alone at the pew, I tell you there are *old babes in the pulpit as well as in the pew*. Our text refers especially to the ministry.

“Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself: yet am not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord.”

When we look into the pulpit carefully we still find there are old babes there *who do not work as they ought to work; who do not preach as they ought to preach; and who fear man more than God.* By these three marks you will know the old babes in the pulpit.

1. Not Working Hard Enough

There are old babes in the pulpit who do not work as hard as they should. In the original language the word “ministers of Christ” reads like this: “The under-rowers of Christ.” It is a nautical term, pertaining to the navy. The man who is down at the oar rowing is called in Greek: *υπηρετης*, and that is the very word that here is translated “ministers of Christ.” In other words, you know very well when the captain stands in the vessel and the under-rowers are down at the oars, that they not only must work, but they must work according to orders, and work hard if the vessel is to be propelled. There you have the picture of the true minister of the Gospel who must be willing to go down to his oar and pull, and work hard in the ministry. There seems to be an idea among some people that if they have a boy who has a weak backbone and is not able to handle the plow, or to work in the shop, and isn’t worth anything else for any other purpose, they will make a preacher of him, and it is time that we learn that that kind of preachers are old babes in the pulpit. What we need in the pulpit is the man of muscle, the man of brain and training, and a Christian heart, a man who is not afraid to take hold of anything and lift it up; a man not afraid of work, not lazy; a man who is willing to toil from Monday morning to Saturday night, and from the beginning of the year until the end of the year, until the sweat stands on his face, for the salvation of immortal souls and for the good of the kingdom of God. It is his duty, I say, to take hold of the oar, and go down where God puts him, and pull for the shore until he brings them across the Jordan, saved. But the man who thinks he can sit around in his study half of the time and do nothing, loaf around with his members and visit day after day, doing nothing, that man is an old babe in the pulpit. The man who does not care whether the children are instructed or not; who does not care whether he works in the Sunday School or not; who has no interest in the young people; who does not care whether things go or not just so he gets his salary, I do not care by what name he is known, or what church he is in, is an old babe in the pulpit.

Not only must he be willing to go down where God puts him, but he must go up where God puts him. While it is a fact that this term shows the under-rower on the boat works down below, it also shows he is handling the oars at the command of Jesus Christ, and not at the command of this or that man, or of the world. And while therefore we ought to know that as a servant of God there is nothing too low for us to reach down and help lift up, we must understand on the other hand that there is no man can stand above us and lord it over us when we are dealing with the heritage of God. It is not man that has placed me here; it is not man that has placed a pastor – a truly called pastor – in any church, but it is God that has placed him there, through the voice of His people, and he is responsible, not to any man, but to the Captain of our salvation, God Almighty, and if that is not true, then we have got an old babe in the pulpit.

2. Not Preaching As They Should

It is just as true when they do not preach as they should. “Ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.” – stewards of the mysteries of God! Men come to me and say, I cannot understand at all what you teach about the Lord’s Supper. You say. Take eat, this is My body; you say. Take drink, this is My blood; I cannot understand it, and unless you explain it to me I will never believe it. I want you to understand, my friends, that that minister of the Gospel who tries to explain to the people what God Himself never explained, is an old babe. Where did God ever tell you that any man with a head that will go into a seven and a quarter hat can comprehend God who can put all the worlds inside of the palm of His hand? It is time we are getting rid of those little ideas that, if we cannot comprehend what God says, that we will not believe it. I thank my God that I find very little in the Bible that I can comprehend. I am like Dwight L. Moody, if I could comprehend everything I find in the Bible, I would say it is man’s book. I have in my library no fewer than fifteen hundred volumes by men who have had great minds, and although I consider my mind small, I have never found a man’s mind yet that I could not comprehend, but I thank God for the one Book in my library when I have it there, which I hold in my hand now, that no man ever yet could comprehend, and consequently no man on earth ever produced that Book, except by inspiration; it is the Book of the Holy Spirit; and I say again that the minister of the Gospel who stands

around and apologizes for not being able to comprehend God, is an old babe, and the sooner he teaches his people that when God says a thing He means it, whether we comprehend it or not, the sooner we will all get the one mind of Jesus Christ. Notice well, "...the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." It is not my realm to explain mysteries; it is my realm to tell you what God says, and you believe it, and let the mysteries be mysteries. The Lord's Supper is a mystery to me and I do not explain it; I tell you what God says. The resurrection is a mystery; you do not understand it. Regeneration is a mystery. How can this little babe be regenerated? Why, how in the name of common sense can an old babe be regenerated? Do you know? It is a mystery. One thing I do know, that God will regenerate children. He says so. What are you going to do about it? I not only know it because He says so; I know I was regenerated myself as a child.

Not only should they preach the mysteries of God, those who are not old babes, but I say, on the other hand, that they should be faithful, and the man that is not faithful to his Master is another old babe in the pulpit. "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." The question should not arise at all whether our preacher can preach like Paul, or Peter, or Apollos; the question should arise. Do the things he preaches come from God's Word? Are the things he tells us true? Is the message from God? Are the things he tells us, whether we are willing to hear them or not. Gospel, or are they law? If so, the thing to do is to know that that man is faithful, and faithful to his Master; if not, he is an old babe in the pulpit.

3. Fears Man More Than God

The third mark by which you may know an old babe in the pulpit is that he fears man more than he fears his God.

"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self, for I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me Is the Lord."

Henry Ward Beecher made the statement one time that when he was ordained to the ministry of the Gospel, he did not ordain his manhood away. It seems sometimes, some men, the moment they become ministers of the

Gospel, seem to think they are not men any more that they may not walk nor talk nor look like other men, but have got to be about half angels on earth, and walk around and listen to what everybody says, and try to act in such a way, that they will just hop and dance as other people pull the string, like the monkey at the corner of the street. I pity the old babe in the pulpit that is constantly listening to what somebody thinks or says. Every day in my visits I am informed how my name is discussed, my preaching discussed in the shops, one man fights for me, and the other is giving me – I don't know what, neither do I care. If I were an old babe I would run down to the shop and find out what you are talking about. What do I care for your judgment? What do I care about what you say? An old babe, I repeat it, would run around and try to find out what this one says and that one says, but a man who is a real genuine man and knows the message he is delivering is true, will deliver it, and when it is delivered, the result is with the people and with their God. The word here called "man's judgment" more literally translated means man's day. "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or in man's day." This is only man's day. I am willing to have these sermons that I am preaching in Mansfield, put off for judgment until that day when the graves are all opened and we stand before our Lord and God, and on that day it does not make any difference what they said down in the shops, or what they said on the street, or what anybody said; God will settle matters on that day. And so I say with the Apostle Paul that I do not care what the people say or think, when I have done what I believe is right and my conscience tells me is right. Furthermore, we need not even trust to our own conscience at all times. The apostle says here: "For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me, is the Lord."

I hear so many people say: If we just live according to conscience, we will be all right. Those poor old mothers of the Moabites, take their dear little children from their own breasts and lay them into the red-hot arms of Moloch to satisfy conscience. Is it right? There are men right here in this city who would think they were committing an unpardonable crime if they were to eat meat on Friday. Is that right? I would have you to remember that while no man should do anything contrary to conscience, that, on the other hand, conscience is often in error and may be educated to wrong as well as right. The Apostle Paul said, I am not going to be judged by you Corinthians; I am not going to be judged by the people in this day; my

Judge is coming on that last great day, and when we stand before Him, the question will not be. Is it Apollos, or is it Paul, or is it Peter; on that day the question will be. Did you repent of your sins, and did you believe in Christ, and were you faithful unto Him until death? Paul virtually says to those Corinthians, I have little patience with you old babes; you have been quarreling and having your strife to tear down the kingdom of God instead of repenting and trying to build it up, and my message not only to this congregation tonight, but to every congregation in the world, is this, instead of trying to find a little party here and a little party there, to stir up a faction here and a faction there to hurt Christ, the thing to do is to get down on your knees, look into your own hearts through the law of God, and find your own faults and your own sins, and repent of them, and pray for the rest of us and help to work together for the spreading of God's kingdom on earth, instead of stirring up strife against the Lord and Master who died to purchase His church.

In conclusion, let me call attention to the fifth verse of our text: "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God." Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, for then all deeds will come to light; all thoughts will become visible, and all will get all the praise they deserve. Oh, what a thought to take home with you. This as Advent. We are not only thinking now of the Christ that shall be born, but we are thinking now of the Christ that has been born and we commemorate His birth and think of His coming to judge the quick and the dead; and when that day comes, I tell you, my friends, there will be some deeds uncovered that will astonish us all. On that day it will be seen how men looked up to in the world have gone to the euchre party and there have won the affections of other men's wives, and today are living in adultery with them. On that day we will discover what it means to have the public dance in the hands and in the realm of associations in which there are preachers and professed Christians; and we will discover on that day how preachers and deacons and members of churches were walking hand in hand, brother with brother, to help ruin and damn immortal souls. On that day it will be seen how skeletons will be brought out of closets that will make men tremble and weak, and make them ask the question, Will not the mountains fall over us and cover us? But on that great Judgment Day, when death has been

conquered forever, what good would it do if the mountains did fall on you, if under them you could never die? On that day there will be revelations made of which you never dreamed. Oh, what foolishness for people to act in such a way as to think it will never be seen. The whole life is going to be uncovered on that day, and the ungodly, damnable deeds that men have done, will stand before our eyes. Nay, on that great day some things will come forth that you thought never could come forth, even on the judgment day – " . . . who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." There are counsels held today in upper rooms that are contrary to God's Holy Word; there are counsels held in lower rooms that are contrary to the voice of the Holy Spirit; but the worst of all counsels are those that have the devil presiding over them in the hearts of men, and have never been uttered by the tongue; and on that day those counsels shall be exposed, and on that day, thanks be to God, you will all get the praise you deserve. We are constantly fearing that we may have done something good and some one never heard it; we are afraid the world doesn't understand us, and does not understand how noble we are, and how good we are. The Lord assures us on that great day when He does come, He will give us all the praise we deserve. "And then shall every man have praise of God." I am glad to know there is no man on earth so low and so mean that there is not a good spot in him; I am glad to know there is no one on earth, on the Judgment Day, no difference how mean and low he has been, that God will not hold up some little thing he said or did and show it to the whole universe, as much as to say, He did these things, and I give him credit for them; but on that day the question will not be. What did you do, or what did you not do; the question will be more largely this: You did sin and you know it; by your omission and by your commission, and you did hear there was only one Savior, Jesus Christ, and I was preached to you, and you know that you heard it, that only through Me could you find eternal life, and some of you know, you had the opportunity to accept Me, and you rejected Me; and now you must all bow your knees before Me in heaven and on earth, and under the earth; every knee shall bow. And those that are saved shall bow before Him in heaven forever, and the lost shall bow their knees and take eternal farewell into hell, and that is the end of it. This is God's Word, and if you have never heard a sermon before and shall never hear another one, I say to you before you leave tonight, for the blood of your own skirts would be upon my

shoulders if I did not tell you the truth, if you do not repent of your sins and trust wholly and solely in Jesus Christ and unite with His Church, purchased with His blood, you have no hope of salvation. This is Gospel; this is not the story of an old babe. Amen.

4. Precious Presents From Paul in Prison. *Fourth Sunday In Advent.*

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Phil. 4:4-7.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

THAT WAS A MEMORABLE NIGHT when the Apostle Paul at Troas saw in a vision a man standing before him and crying out: Come over into Macedonia and help us! Up to that hour in the year 53 there was no Christian Church in all Europe. The apostle obeyed the voice, went over to Philippi, and there, through a woman, Lydia of Thyatira, the door was opened for the Church of God in Europe. It was not long until the Apostle Paul and Silas were thrown into prison. A young lady who had been practicing divination for the financial support of her masters, ran after the Apostle Paul until he turned around and cried to that spirit to come out of her, and from that moment her masters stirred up a riot, which resulted in the arrest and the throwing not only into prison, but into the inmost prison, and into the stocks, these two men of God. There they sat in the midnight hour with their feet fast in the stocks, happy as they could be in Christ, singing songs of praise until God Almighty shook the prison, threw the bars of the gates down and loosed the bands. The jailer was awakened and cried out: What is wrong in this jail? Yea, he was about to take his own life, when

Paul cried out: Do thyself no harm; we are all here. Then the jailer, recognizing that he was in the hands of the Almighty God, fell down before Paul and Silas and said: Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they answered: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. A few moments more, and the jailer was washing the stripes of the men, who had been whipped before they were put into the stocks, and in return Paul and Silas taught them the Word of God, and baptized them that same hour of the night. And there the Church of God was built and established on the Rock of Ages, in a prison, by the Apostle Paul, who heard the voice: Come over into Macedonia and help us. Ten years passed by, but these Philippians will never forget that first missionary. Paul was a most independent man. Although he taught as no other apostle did, the necessity of paying the ministry well, that they might give their whole time to the salvation of souls, yet himself, in order that the Church might receive no wrong impression, labored and toiled with his own hands for a living, and preached the Gospel whenever opportunity was given, and only from churches like the one at Philippi did he ever accept presents. Ten years passed, and Paul was down in another prison, in Rome. The little Philippian church sent a messenger down there with gifts, and Paul was just as happy in the prison at Rome as he was in the prison at Philippi, and there he wrote this beautiful epistle, which is full of joy from beginning to end. The whole message to the Philippians can be summed up in a few words: I am happy in the prison at Rome, and I want you to be happy who were established in a prison when God Almighty shook it up there ten years ago.

We are standing this evening before the threshold of another coming Christmas, and I want to give you tonight:

Precious Presents From Paul In Prison

I am sure you would be glad to get two beautiful presents from the Apostle Paul, and here they are:

- I A Christmas harp.
- II. A Christmas song.

I. A Christmas Harp.

1. Its Strings and Strength

I would have you notice the *strings* and the *strength* of this harp.

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

The peace of God! In those words I find the strings to this beautiful Christmas harp. A harp means music, and it means harmony, and perfect harmony can never be found on earth until we have the peace of God; and the peace of God is the peace that we have with God and with our fellow men. You will remember that when Isaiah spoke of the coming Savior, he said His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. He was known as the Prince of Peace long before Isaiah wrote those beautiful words. He was known as the Prince of Peace by the angels when they sang that song on the morning of creation. When the angels came and sang for the shepherds, each one did not sing his own song; they sang a song that was harmony; a song of the same words, and they ran like this: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. In other words the angels knew that the little Child born in Bethlehem was the promised Prince of Peace; and they knew that He was the one Mediator between God and man; they knew that He was the only one that ever was, or ever would be, who could make peace between a just and righteous God and a lost and condemned sinner who has enmity against God. And so this one Mediator, this Prince of Peace, with His hand divine held to the Father, and with His hand human took hold of our race and said: The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. The Prince of Peace! You and I are by nature lost; you and I are by nature haters of everything that is glorious and holy in God's sight, but here comes the Prince of Peace and works faith in our hearts, and by that faith we take hold of Jesus as the only Savior, and when we have Him as our Savior, then we have got His righteousness, and having His righteousness we come home to the Father in Jesus Christ. We learn in the Word of God that when a man has been baptized into Christ he has put on Christ. If it were possible for one of you to put on my child, you could come into my home and live with me as my child. The very moment you and I accept Jesus Christ as our Savior and are baptized in His name, we put

Him on, and, having Him on, we come home, and His Father is now our Father, and we have peace with God; and that is the first string on the harp that Paul sent as a Christmas gift to the Church at Philippi, and it is the same string he sends on the harp to you and to me as a Christmas gift in 1904.

But a harp with only one string is not a good harp. The peace of God is a string also that brings peace between man and man. In the days when the angels sang: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men, the nations of the world were at war with each other; then every nation was trying to fight its way with the sword and to win more territory by cutting into the wounds that let out the blood. You all know the history of the world has been written with a pen dipped in blood; but you also know that where the Spirit of God reigns, man is opposed to war. They tell us that the Church itself has had a thirty years' war. Suppose it has. I will tell you in the first place that that thirty years war was not carried on by the people who knew the Gospel of Christ, but was carried on by people who had mixed their religion with paganism. But suppose it were true that the Christian Church had a thirty years' war, what is that in comparison with the six thousand years' war that the devil and the world have had? The Lord, our God, I repeat it, wherever He can plant His Spirit in the souls of men, plants there a conscience that is now void of offense and can go home to the Father; but by that same conscience, when God has made peace between me and Him, I want peace with my fellow-man. I know of no better test of true Christianity than simply the desire for peace. Whenever you find me trying to make war with my brother, you can make up your mind I am at war with God. Whenever you can show me as one desiring to stir up anything else but peace, you can make up your mind, there is something wrong between that one yet and God. A true child of God wants peace with the Father, and peace with his fellow men. I do not mean to say by this that when we are true Christians that everybody loves us. Indeed that is not true. The Lord Jesus Christ said to His disciples that they should be hated; that they should be persecuted; and Jesus Christ Himself was hated and persecuted, and was killed by people who had false religions; consequently I tonight come to you with this admonition: Let us not enter upon the following Christmas with hatred in our hearts toward any one; let us get rid of the spirit of revenge. Oh, may the Apostle Paul from his prison

in Rome send you his harp tonight, and that harp is peace with God and peace with your fellow men.

2. Its Strength

We have now noticed the strings of this harp; let us notice its *strength*.

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

The keeper is always supposed to be stronger than the thing kept, and here we are told that this peace of God is so strong, that it shall keep our hearts and keep our minds, and all this through Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ being the Son of God, is the Almighty God: and this peace coming from the Prince of Peace, is as Almighty as Christ Himself; therefore if you have got the peace of God of which I speak, you have got a harp so strong that it holds the heart and holds the mind, and when it holds the heart, it holds a very slippery thing. As I have told you often, the heart of man is very deceitful; the heart of man is one of the hardest things in the world to hold, but the peace of God can hold it, and the peace of God through Jesus Christ can keep it pure and keep it undivided, and make it rich. When temptations come to the one who has peace with God, he says, Away with your temptations; there was a time when I could have been tempted with this or with that offer, but now I have the peace of God in my heart; away with your offer; my heart now says away with anything that will disturb the peace that I have with my God. Not only does it keep the heart pure, but it keeps it undivided. A man who has not got the peace of God is always living a divided life; one day trying to do this, and the next trying to do that; one day he makes up his mind to be a better Christian, and the next day seeing the promise of gain by committing a little sin, he goes and commits it, never exactly sure where he stands; but when a man has the peace of God in his heart, that heart says, Now I am kept by the peace of God; now my heart is undivided; my whole attention now is homeward and heavenward; I have no continuing city here, but I seek one to come, and anything that will keep me away from my church, from my God, from my communion with God in heaven, must go away; my heart is held by the harp sent from the prison by Paul.

It is not only an undivided, but a rich heart. When the Holy Spirit takes hold of a man's heart. He fills that heart with Himself, and from that moment he is rich in God. Have you never noticed how poor some rich people are? Wasn't that man a poor man who tore down his houses and barns and built larger, and said to his soul. Now, my soul, rest in peace, eat, drink and be merry, and so on; that night God came to him and said. Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. Wasn't that a poor, rich man? And wasn't that man who sat upon the throne dressed in purple, not willing to go down to the gate and even alleviate the hunger of poor Lazarus, wasn't he rich in this world? When he went down to hell and cried out to Abraham to send Lazarus to fetch a drop of water to cool his burning tongue, wasn't that rich fool poor? Poor Lazarus lying down at the steps of the rich king, was rich because he had in that heart of his the peace of God; and the rich man on the throne was poor because he had not peace with his God. There you get the strength of this beautiful harp through Jesus Christ.

It not only keeps the heart, but it keeps the mind.

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

Keep the mind! I do not know of anything sadder in all the world than to say of one of the family, he has lost his mind. Rather would I follow one of my family to the grave than to take that one to the hospital for the insane, and yet you and I may soon be called upon to take some of our dearest ones to that hospital. It is no disgrace, as people used to think, to find people mentally sick; you can become mentally sick just as quickly as you can become physically sick, and some of the smartest people in the world may soon be where it must be said of them, they have lost their minds; but the thought that I want to impress upon you is this: Not all who have lost their minds are in the State Hospital. It sometimes hurts some people to tell them if they are not Christians, that they are insane. I do not mean they are insane from a worldly standpoint, but I do mean that from a spiritual standpoint a man living in this world, if he does not believe the Word of God, he is spiritually insane; his mind is lost until it is found by the peace of God, and when the peace of God has found your mind, it holds it, and then, my friends, you have got something that surpasses even your own understanding. “And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding,

shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” The understanding is not greater than the mind, but there is a peace of God which is greater than your understanding, and consequently greater than your mind and, therefore, can hold your mind and keep it. You need not go very far to see these things. Take the history of the Apostle Paul himself; the Apostle Paul as an attorney could have made his mark as a statesman; the Apostle Paul as a linguist could have made his mark in some great university; the Apostle Paul as a plain citizen of Rome might have been free and held the multitudes under his swaying voice as a politician; the Apostle Paul, with all his gifts, might have accumulated wealth; but instead of that he goes out into the world and allows himself to be stoned, and whipped and scourged, thrown into prison, treated worse, the world would say, than a dog; and yet all this time he is as joyful as a bird, singing songs of praise, sending out messages of joy all over the world. Do you understand that? The world does not. It surpasses all understanding. But there is one thing in that great heart that some people never have, he has peace with God, and no difference whether he is put into jail at Philippi, or thrown into prison along the island of Miletus; whether he is swimming for his life, or has the serpent hanging on his arm, no difference where Paul is, he has peace with God, and that peace makes him willing to endure all things for Christ’s sake, as he says here:

“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

There you have the mind of Paul, held by the peace of God which passeth all understanding.

You need not go over to the prison in Rome to find this demonstration of the wonderful power of peace; you can find it in your own lives. I have in mind tonight a dear, sweet mother, happy as any mother that ever walked on earth; she has no income; she depends day by day wholly and fully on God; today He sends a friend here, another one tomorrow, to give her a dime or a dollar, and she lives right on as happy as any person on earth can be. It passeth all understanding. People not having the peace of God as she has, would cry out: What will I do to live? Where will I get my clothes? What shall I eat? How shall I keep warm? worrying day and night; but this

woman, held by the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, has her mind wrapped up in a power that is in the hand of the Almighty God. This, my friends, is the Christmas harp that the Apostle Paul sends from the prison as a present to you and to me.

II. A Christmas Song

Together with this harp from the Apostle Paul comes another gift from him, and that is a Christmas song, with its *substance* and its *singers*.

1. Its Substance

“Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.”

The substance, then, of this song, is: Rejoice forever in the Lord; and The Lord is at hand.

There is no question, my friends, about the fact that every person loves to enjoy himself. There is no one in this audience who does not seek enjoyment, and who does not seek the greatest enjoyment, and I would be the last man on earth to try to rob you of the greatest enjoyment which you have; but there is one thing I love to do, and that is to lift people above the low enjoyments to higher enjoyments; above enjoyments that are only temporary and lead to death, to enjoyments that are high and can be kept up forever. Paul never was opposed to joy. Indeed, as I said, this epistle is full of rejoicing in the Lord. “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.” If there ever was a happy man on earth, it was the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul never complained that he could not play euchre any more; he never complained that he was forbidden to dance any more. You could hardly imagine the Apostle Paul enjoying a good euchre game; you can hardly imagine him enjoying a public dance, and much less a round dance; you can hardly imagine him sitting down in prison with a big long pipe and smoking, and wondering why the Church does not prosper; you cannot imagine the Apostle Paul ever asking the question, How can I have greater enjoyment than I now have? There was no power in heaven nor on earth, anywhere, that could rob him of his joy after he found peace with God;

consequently he wants to send the song out into the world that we should raise above these low things. Just because a king was crazy one time and learned how to play euchre, is there any reason why all the Christian people in the world should act that game out again and find their highest enjoyment there? We are not trying to rob the people of certain joy. Why should we get our highest enjoyment in the pleasures that can be engaged in by lunatics all over the world? I have stood at the doors of the insane asylum at Columbus and have watched lunatics dance. I have never seen any Christian that could dance any better; never. Do not allow yourself to call a thing that lunatics can do; do not allow yourself to call a thing a monkey can be taught to do, or that an elephant can be taught to do, your highest enjoyment. The Apostle Paul called attention to the fact that there is a joy that is above the animal; that there is a joy that is above little minds; that there is a joy so high that it will not only be above the low – and you all know that the lowest people in the world love to engage in the things I have mentioned – that there is a joy so high, I say, that man must get up by the power of the Almighty God to enjoy it. What I would love to do, as a man of God, is to invite you to the highest joys that can be obtained, and these are the ones that have peace from heaven and peace to the earth, and shall abide when you have closed your eyes in death, with God forever and forever. Then let your joy be in the Lord forever; this is the first part of the substance of this beautiful gift of Christmas song.

And then, in the same connection, he says: “The Lord is at hand.” One reason why the Apostle Paul was always so happy, no difference where he was, was because he realized the fact that he was never alone; that the God that called from heaven and said: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? was the same God that said: Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world; that He was the same God who said: Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them; the same God that sent a man in a vision and said: Come over into Macedonia and help us. Paul obeyed the call and went over there and established the Church. When they put him in the prison and fastened his feet into the stocks, Paul did not cry; he did not worry at midnight when others were sleeping; he recognized the fact that there were three of them in prison, Paul and Silas, and God; and consequently he said, The Lord is at hand, and I will sing a song of praise to Him; and while he was singing that song of praise, God Almighty, who was with him, took hold of that prison and

shook it, and thereby shook Europe; and by shaking Europe, shook the world. God was with him. That is the song for Christmas that Paul would send out from the prison to you and to me.

Not only is the Lord at hand in Philippi, but in Rome. It made no difference whether in prison, or on the ship, or on the island of Miletus, or in the prison at Rome, God was with him, and God being with him, he said. Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice." I believe the apostle Paul thought in his day that the world would not stand as long as it has already stood; I think he looked in a vision beyond that day when the church should spread from land to sea, to that hour when Christ should come with all His holy angels again; I believe he thought the time was not far off when Christ should come to judge the quick and the dead, and therefore cried out, "The Lord is at hand." If it was not very far off in those days of Paul, Oh, how much nearer it must be today! We can all sing that song tonight, "The Lord is at hand." And now, that the Christmas spirit is moving the world, and the streets are crowded with the purchasers of gifts, and the church bells are already calling us to prepare to sing: "Christ is born," this song of Paul is especially appropriate: "The Lord is at hand." It will not be long until there will be such a Christmas as there never was before and never shall be again; when not only a few angels, but all the angels shall take part, and not only all the living, but all the dead shall rise, and we shall stand before God face to face. Oh, what a Christmas that will be! "The Lord is at hand."

2. The Singers

Let me call your attention a few moments to the singers. We have heard the substance of the song – what about the singers? In the first place they must let themselves joyfully down, and then lift all their cares prayerfully up.

They must let themselves joyfully down. "Let your moderation be known unto all men." This word moderation has been translated many times, and there is no one word in English or in German that can express fully what the Greek word means. Some good translators have translated it as gentleness; some as being affable; some as being meek; some tender, careful; avoiding all extremes; not trying to make everybody think as you do about things that are not settled by the Word of God. In other words, there are some people who are always very unhappy for the reason that they

have ideas of their own and think that everybody must think just as they do, and if they do not, they are in trouble. The apostle Paul says virtually this: There are some things that are settled by the eternal Word of God; hold fast to them until you die; but when it comes to things pertaining to questions of right or wrong, outside of the moral law; when it comes to the things of this world, dealing with different individuals, under different environments, learn to be all things to all men; learn to be moderate in all things, and let this moderation be known unto all men. In other, words, let yourself down joyfully, and do not stand up as the only lord of lords and king of kings, but rather as a poor humble sinner saved by the grace and mercy of God, with your heart and mind held by His peace, and if you do so, then you will have a joy that will make you sing; that will make you happy forever and forever.

And right in this connection I will say that the way to be really happy, is always to lift your cares up by prayer. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." There are so many people in the present day calling themselves Christians who seem to even boast of being in trouble; full of cares; wondering why God did this and why He did that; weeping and moaning and finding fault with Providence. I have called attention to this matter before, but whenever the Word of God presents it again, I shall present it again. There is nothing that has hurt the church of God so much as the inconsistency of professed Christians. Ministers of the Gospel, who proclaim the everlasting Gospel of peace, when they are in trouble sometimes act like little children; and some times professed Christians, who all their lives have sung, "When we cannot see the way, let us trust and still obey" the first time they are in trouble they are downhearted, believing that God has forsaken them, worried about this and that; and I say again, nothing has ever hurt the church more than the inconsistent actions of professed Christians. Why is it that some Christians have got so much trouble all the time? It is because they are trying to put their troubles down, and whenever you try to put your troubles down they will rise again. Troubles are like rubber balls; when you knock them down, they will bounce up. There is only one way to get rid of troubles, and that is to push them in the direction they want to go. They want to rise. Then lift them up, and hold them up to the throne of God and keep them there forever. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." The Christmas

song must have that thought in it: Whatever your trials and troubles are, lift them up to the throne of God. There are four expressions in that verse I would have you remember: The one is prayer in general. Commune with your God. God talks to you through His Word. You talk to Him with your prayers in general. But, my friends, there is more in this than simply a prayer. “But in everything by prayer and supplication.” Prayer is talking with God; supplication is pleading with God; prayer is conversing pleasantly with God; supplication is begging with tears of God. The way to lift those troubles away from you forever is to thank God that you saw them and had them. I know from my own personal experience, and I proclaim this as the rule for every Christian: No difference what your trials are, whether sickness, financial loss, or death, the first thing you must do is to remember that God intended that affliction for a purpose. It was a training for you; it was to lead you nearer heaven. The first thing you must do with your troubles is to get down on your knees in order to get under them, thank God for them, and rise with them and supplicate them to heaven, and keep them there. And then; as a final act in your prayers, tell God just exactly what you want, and let your requests be made known unto God. Whatever trials and troubles you have got, whatever prayers you have that you desire answered, go to Him in all simplicity and say: O my God, this is the thing that troubles me; this is the thing I want light on; show me day by day how to go, how to live, how to pray, and I will trust Thee day by day; and then, when you pray as I have told you tonight, with the peace of God all around your heart and all around your mind, surpassing all understanding, you will rise with a new life and a new joy, and you will be happy – happy through your life, and after death happy forever. This, my friends, is another present from Paul in prison.

In conclusion, I see as I look back in history a beautiful constellation of three bright stars, that may help you and me to receive these presents joyfully. I see in history the names of three mothers: Nonna, Monica, and Anthusa.

Nonna is a star in the constellation of history that will help every mother to know how to live. She was the wife of a heathen of Capadocia; her desire was that she might some time or other give to the world a noble son; she believed it was all wrong as a Christian to mourn. Her prayer for a son was answered. She not only received a son, but a daughter and two sons. The first one she called Gregory and the second she named Caesar. When little

Gregory was born, she ran to the temple where her own heathen husband had become a minister of the Gospel, and laid his little hands on the Word of God, and prayed that he might be a mighty man of God. Little Gregory had all the traits of his mother; Caesar the traits of his father. These two boys grew up, and one became a mighty statesman and physician; the other became one of our great church fathers. When Gregory the father died, after whom the son was named, this son preached his funeral sermon; the mother went to the funeral, not with black on her hat; not with a black dress on, but she clothed herself in white; she did not shed tears; she sang songs of praise to the heavenly Father. Her impress on her children and on the nation was so great that her name has come down in history as one of the great Godly mothers. When her hour came to die there was only one of the family left besides herself, and that was the one whose little hands were laid on the Bible and he himself dedicated to God. When her last hour came, she went to the temple and held to the altar with one hand and with the other lifted up said: "God be merciful to me, my King Jesus," and went home – A bright star in the constellation of mothers.

Right in this same connection let us not forget Monica, the woman born in Africa in the year 332, who married a man who was rich and famous – Patricius. Her prayer was that she might give to the world a son who might be a great power. Early in the boy's career the father died, himself having been brought to Christ by this Godly wife. This boy, at the age of seventeen, plunged into sin. He was a brainy young man, but instead of supporting his mother as we would expect a young man to do when the father is dead, he deserted her and plunged deeper and deeper into sin. Monica prayed for that boy day and night, and at last she was so discouraged that she felt like giving him up as a lost man. Standing one day in the presence of a great bishop, the tears rolling down over her face, she said: "I have just about given up praying for my boy;" but the bishop said, "Monica, no son of those tears can ever be lost," and she took new courage. But time passed on, and she gave up a second time. That night she went to bed and she had a dream, and in that dream she was crying bitterly; she saw the vision of a young man coming up to her bed saying to her: "Woman, why weepest thou?" She answered: "I have a son; his father is in heaven, and the boy is lost, and I can not help but weep." The vision said: "Weep not, thy son standeth here," and she opened her eyes, and there stood Augustine by the side of her bed. She took new courage and prayed again, and again and

again, for nine long years she followed that boy with her prayers. At last at the age of twenty-seven he said: "I am going to leave you, mother; I can stand your prayers no longer; I am going to Rome," and started down to the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, but who was standing by his side but Mother Monica. "I will follow you wherever you go." Evening came, and the boy, in order to deceive his mother, said, "I am not going to Rome," and the mother went over to the temple and thanked God that the boy now had returned; and while she was in the temple praying, he jumped on board and crossed the big water to Rome. She came back, and the boy was gone, but her prayers had not ceased; she prayed God to show her the way, and the mother gathered up her money and went from Africa to Rome, followed him day by day until, at the age of thirty-three, and her age of fifty-six, she had brought him to the Savior, and, baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, they had resolved to go back to Africa. A fever overtook the mother; nine days she lay there helpless; the boy, a child of God, watching over her – the same boy that God showed her in a vision long before – this son of prayer, who became the greatest church father; and on the ninth day, instead of going to Africa, she went home to her God. – Another star in the constellation of Christian mothers.

I have in mind still one more, and that is Anthusa. Anthusa was the wife of the great General Secundus, who, also a heathen, was brought to the Savior by this praying mother. Her prayer was: "O God, give me a son of this great General Secundus." Soon after the general died, and when she looked down into his grave she said: "I shall love thee, my husband, in thy son," and from that day she took that son to her bosom, and prayed for him day and night until he was fifteen years of age, and then she was called home. This son never forgot that mother's prayers; he became the patriarch of Constantinople; he became the greatest orator of the age; he proclaimed the Gospel of Christ with power such as was not proclaimed to the days of Luther, and the world said he is golden-mouthed, and consequently gave him that beautiful name – Chrysostomus.

Let us learn from these mothers how to live; let us learn from them how to pray; let us learn from these mothers how to celebrate Christmas, and how to rejoice. Let us learn from Nonna, if we must go to the funeral, to go dressed in white; if we must go to the funeral, take the hymnbook and praise God for the higher life of those who have passed beyond. Oh, the darkness of the faith that will moan when the kind hand of God has lifted

our dear ones to the throne on high! May the day soon come when the Christian Church will rise above the low level of the heathen, when we will tear off the black robes of sorrow, and put on the white garment of peace, and rise, with songs of praise, at the graves of our dead. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for that great Christmas gift, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Son of man, the one Mediator between God and man. We thank Thee for the peace which we have through justification in Him. And now we pray Thee, O Lord and God, that Thou wilt impress the message of the evening upon the hearts of all those who have heard it. Lord forbid that any who have heard this message tonight, should pass this Christmas as a child of the devil. Do Thou give us Thy Holy Spirit, and convince us of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment. Help us to see that there is a better way to live and an only right way to live, and that is as a true child of God. Oh, do Thou help that we may all at this coming Christmas have Christ as ours, in our homes and in our hearts, and as the message to proclaim to our fellow men. Lord God, do Thou visit the homes of the poor and the needy everywhere, and move Thy children to be kind to all who need special kindness. Help us, heavenly Father, to remember that it makes no difference whether the skin is black or white, whether from noble or fallen families, that the soul is precious, and that to care for one of these is to care for Christ Himself. Give us a fullness of faith, such as we never possessed before. Lift us into the realm of Thy spirituality which shall enable us to accept the gifts of Paul, the Christmas harp, and the Christmas song; help us to play it with deft fingers and to sing it with a heart full of praise. We ask this all in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

5. The Wonder Of All Wonders. *Christmas.*

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Titus 2:11-14.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

TO SEE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE who have come here this icy evening into the temple of God would, in itself be very wonderful, were it not for the great truth that Jesus Christ is more wonderful. The prophet said: "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace;" and when you remember that all these names fit the newly born Christ-child in the crib of Bethlehem, it is not surprising that people should make a special effort to come to God's house, not only on Christmas, but any other day, to worship Him, who is the only Savior of the world. God is wonderful in every attribute. Creation is wonderful. Just imagine nothing in space but darkness, and God saying: Let there be light; and there was light. Wonderful! Imagine no earth in space and God saying. Let there be a world; and there are the hills and the mountains and that globe rolling in space, and nothing to hold it but the Word of God. Wonderful! Not only is creation wonderful, but Providence is wonderful. Some things have lost their wonder because of their ever-presence. When a man takes a grain of corn and plants it in the field, and from that one grain brings home in the fall an ear with a thousand grains, we seem to think there is nothing wonderful about that, and yet it is wonderful. If, this

evening, I were to take some shot and plant them in a field, and in a few months by watering and hoeing those shot, you would discover a shotgun growing up, you would say that is wonderful; and yet it would not be any more wonderful than for a grain of corn to bring a thousand grains of corn. We have not solved the mysteries around us any more than the mysteries imaginary. A man who sows his wheat and reaps his harvest, is reaping just as much a wonder of God as he would if he planted Jews-harps and reaped pianos. We see the little bird as it sits on the nest in the tree over the little blue eggs, and in a short time we notice the mother-bird feeding the open mouths of her little ones; and in a short time these little ones, with feathers on their wings, fly from branch to branch, and sing, and we forget that this is just as wonderful as that the planting of a violin should bring forth a piano to fly from world to world. Not only is Providence wonderful, but regeneration is wonderful. When man by nature is an enemy of God, and yet, without any perceptible action on God's part, he becomes a newly born man, loves God, and would die for him, it is wonderful. It has well been said by some theologians that regeneration is the greatest wonder there ever was; and yet there is another wonder that possibly is even greater than regeneration. Before I give you the great wonder of all wonders, I would call your attention to the fact that all the great acts of Christ were wonderful. That the God-man should die on Calvary's hill is wonderful. That the Rock of Ages, that plays with the stars on the ends of His fingers, should sleep in a rock is wonderful. That He should rise from the dead is wonderful. That God, with outstretched hands should begin to ascend, higher and higher, until He goes home to the Father on Ascension Day, to sit on the right hand of the Father, there to remain and rule the universe until He shall come to judge the quick and the dead, is wonderful. That on the day of Pentecost one hundred and twenty in prayer should hear a rushing and a sound as of a mighty storm, and tongues of fire sitting upon them, and in a short time these men should speak the languages of the world, and a few thousand of people should have been brought to the feet of Jesus, is wonderful. But, my friends, there never would have been a Pentecost; there never would have been an ascension; there never would have been a resurrection; there never would have been a crucifixion of Christ, had it not been for the wonder of all wonders, the Incarnation of God. I invite you this morning to the manger of Bethlehem, to show you:

The Wonder Of All Wonders

And the wonder is this, that in that little box you find *all the grace and all the greatness of God*. “For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men;” and that same grace is called in another verse, the great God. “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” now the fact that Jesus Christ has in His little body in that little manger at Bethlehem all the grace of the great God, and the greatness of God in Himself, is the wonder of all wonders. Let us this morning go to that wonder of all wonders, and there

- I. Live.
- II. Learn.
- III. Look.
- IV. Labor.

I. Live

Let us go there to live. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men.” Jesus Christ, who lies in the crib at Bethlehem is the only way to heaven; He is the *only Savior of the world; and He is in essence the means of grace*.

He is the only way to heaven

I say, first of all, He is the only way to heaven. When Jacob had taken the birthright from his brother Esau and slept with his head upon a stone, he saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven and the angels of God ascending and descending, and we are told by one of the evangelists that that ladder was a type of Jesus Christ, with His two natures, on whom the angels of God ascend and descend, the only way to heaven. Christ Himself described that way when He said: I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no man cometh to the Father but by Me. Wonder of wonders! A little child, in a little manger, in a little stable, in little Bethlehem, the great ladder that reaches to heaven! Is not that wonderful?

Not only is He the only way to heaven, but He is the only Savior of the world. “For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all

men.” There is a difference of opinion as to whether “all men” ought to depend on “appeared” or upon “bringeth,” but it makes little difference which way we construct the sentence. In the one sentence it would read this way: For the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared; otherwise it would read as in our text: “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” In essence it is all the same. The grace of God which has been from all eternity, before the foundation of the world was laid, exhibiting itself in the promise that a Savior would come, now has appeared. Here this grace lies in that little crib, and this grace is the salvation of all men, for every man that can be saved. The Apostle Paul, recognizing this fact, looked into that crib one time and wrote down words that never can be erased, because God said: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word shall not pass away; when He said: There Is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby a man can be saved. At another time, looking into that crib and then up to the very throne of God, he said: Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. Why? Because there is no other salvation for any man on earth than this wonder of all wonders, the Christ-child, born at Bethlehem.

Now, my friends, in that crib, when you look again, you see the essence of the means of grace. Lutherans have no trouble in knowing what we mean when we say “means of grace,” No man has ever been saved except by the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit never saved any man except through the means of grace. The means of grace are the Word of God and the holy sacraments – in the Old Testament circumcision and the passover; in the New Testament, baptism and the Lord’s supper; and of the means of grace it is said, there are three that bear record on earth, the Spirit and the water and the blood, and these three agree in one. These three agree in the one Word. These three agree in the one little Child that lies in the crib of Bethlehem – the little God-man – for without Him there would be no Bible. Take Christ out of the prophecies and there is no Old Testament left. Take Christ out of the evangels and you have no evangels left. Take Christ out of the Acts of the Apostles and the messengers of God are gone. Take Christ out of the Epistles and there is nothing left but empty words. Take Christ out of the Book of Revelation and there is no revelation there. In other words, in the little crib at Bethlehem lies the Word of God that became flesh and dwelt among us, and without Him was not anything made that was made. Wonder

of wonders! There lies the very substance of holy baptism. That little Child, eight days old, is circumcised because He is still under the Old Testament law. When that little Child enters the ministry He is baptized because He enters the new covenant. In Him circumcision and baptism unite. In that little crib of Bethlehem the Paschal lamb and the Lord's Supper unite in this one Savior of the world. There can be no baptism without Christ. Did you ever stop to think that when the Apostle Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, he never mentioned the name of the Father at all, and did not mention the name of the Holy Spirit when he said: Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. In other words, the Apostle Peter recognized the fact that there could not possibly be a baptism without Jesus Christ in it, who lies in the crib of Bethlehem. And the same is true with regard to the Lord's Supper. If the Lord's Supper were nothing but bread and wine, you could have it without Christ; but in that little crib lies the God-man; in that little crib lies the One that gives Himself to you in the Lord's Supper; in that little crib lies the One that was in the Paschal lamb; in that little crib lies the One that comes to you and says, Take eat, this is My body; take drink, this is My blood. This is the wonder of all wonders, that you can have all the means of grace, the way to heaven and the salvation of the whole world combined in that little manger at Bethlehem.

My dear friends, this is the place to live. Up to the present time I have not even wished you a Merry Christmas as a congregation. One reason I have not done so before is this: Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year amounts to nothing if you will not step up to this crib and look at the wonder of all wonders, and live. In other words, how can you wish a man a Merry Christmas if you do not at the same time invite him where he can live? How can a man be happy on Christmas when he is living the life of a child of the devil? How can you have a Merry Christmas when you do not know the only way that leads to heaven? How can a man be happy on Christmas when he does not know if he should die before the next day, whether he dies a child of the devil or a child of God. As I look around me today, I do not wish to leave this part of my sermon without a personal examination in every soul. I want every father in this house this evening, and every mother, and every son, and every daughter, to ask themselves this question: Do I live? Have I in me this morning the assurance of eternal life? As I look into the little manger and see the wonder of all wonders, is this

Christ mine, and am I His? Wonder of wonders! We want to live. I do not want a single soul to go out of this house this evening, and then go out into the world, and go up to the Judgment, lost. For the sake of the mother who gave you birth; for the sake of your father who begat you; for the sake of your wife in heaven; for the sake of your dear little children on high; for the sake of the prayers of the millions of people today for your salvation; for your own soul's sake, let me ask you now to come with me to the crib of Bethlehem and look at the little Child – the Wonder of all wonders. There lies all the grace of God and all the greatness of God, and if you cannot be saved there, you cannot be saved anywhere, for in that little crib lies the Child that is to die on Calvary's hill. He is your Savior. Accept Him. Look and live. Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, saith the Lord, for I am God, and besides Me there is none else. As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked should turn from his evil ways and live.

II. Learn.

And now that we live, let us also learn.

“Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”

When you step up to this little crib of Bethlehem, remember that there lies the Teacher of all teachers; the honest Teacher; the Teacher that wants you to hate sin; to love righteousness; and to live aright in this present world.

Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, is the message of the Christ-child; and should we not learn to deny ourselves of sin and lust when this little Christ child was willing to deny Himself heaven and all His glory to become our Savior? Oh, let me ask you this evening to hate sin. It was sin that compelled this holy Son of God to die for you and for me. How can you love it? You may love a knife, but if you know that that knife has been murdering people in the past, you do not want to carry it in your pocket. Sin has murdered my Savior. Will you still love it? Oh, hate sin. Learn this evening, while you behold this Wonder of wonders. Look and learn there, not only to hate sin, but to hate lust in all its forms. You say, I have such a

desire to do this, and to do that, which are wrong. Every man on earth has his pet sins, the very sins that he loves best; those are the very sins that are the sins of lust, and these sins must be hated until you can separate yourself from them by the grace of God in the little crib of Bethlehem. Lust will never grow at the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ. There are some plants that will grow nearly everywhere, but you cannot plant lust by the side of the cross and let it vine around and through the wounded hands of the Savior crucified. Oh, whenever you feel that this passion is getting ahead of you and leading you on to your special sin, whatever it may be, go quickly and learn of the great Teacher to despise lust and to hate it.

On the other hand, learn of Him to love the things that are good and holy. We should live soberly and righteously and godly. The word here translated “soberly,” really means wise. Live wisely, live righteously and live godly. They were wise men who came from the east to behold the new born King. You were wise this evening for coming to God’s house and hearing of this Wonder of wonders. Only wise people will be saved. Those who reject salvation can never be called wise in this world, nor on the Judgment day, nor in hell. Live wisely, then. Do the right thing in the right time, every time. Live soberly and live righteously. The Psalmist sang: The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. That is the path I want you to walk on – the path of righteousness. Believe in the new born King; accept His righteousness as your own, and then living, learn; learn to walk in His path, led by His hand, with one question before your eyes day and night. Is it right? Is it right? I know of no better advice to give you all on this. Christmas evening than, first of all, to live in Christ, and then put the question before you in everything that is to be determined in the future. Is it right? If it is not right, don’t do it, for God’s sake, don’t do it. If you are not sure whether it is right or not, don’t do it; the very fact that you are not sure, is an evidence that it is wrong. When a man does absolutely right, he knows it, and there is no question about it. These debatable questions are all wrong, just because they are debatable. We do not debate whether it is right to murder or not; we do not debate whether it is right to honor father and mother or not; we do not debate whether it is right to lie or not. Right is plain, and the answer comes back, Is it right?

Yes, it is right. In God's name do it. If it isn't right, for God's sake quit it. Look at the Wonder of wonders this evening, and learn.

And while you learn to hate sin, and to love righteousness and live godly, remember the time to do it is now. A kind of notion has come through false teachers, all over the world, that there is a great eternal progress beyond this life, and that no difference how we live, nor how we die, away out beyond the grave somewhere, sometime, we are going to reach the perfection of God Himself, and it is by the false lie that the devil has planted into the hearts of the people that hundreds and thousands are going down to hell day after day. This little Savior lying in the crib of Bethlehem would never have made His bed with the cattle if there had been a salvation after the judgment. He never Would have come here and appointed His apostles to preach the Gospel to the ends of the world saying, then shall the end come, if all this were only the beginning, and the end should come after a while. The Apostle Paul, recognizing this great truth, wrote to Titus saying: Live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. Now is the time to live right, not in a thousand years from now. Now, the present world. Do you recognize the fact that right now there is a power in you to live others to hell or to heaven, by your very actions? Look at the Lord Jesus Christ; Pontius Pilate sitting before Him, our Savior a prisoner there, in perfect silence; the king with all his soldiers and all the powers of government back of him, stands and trembles. What makes Pilate tremble? Look at Daniel Webster making the greatest speech of his life. Edward Hale says that literally sparks emitted from his eyes. Where did those sparks come from? Look at the Apostle Paul, a prisoner, with chains on his hands, standing before king Agrippa, and Felix, and other rulers. Why should any government on earth be afraid of that little Paul? Felix trembled because Paul recognized the fact that he is living in the present world.

In 1848 the cannon were staked on the main streets of Paris; a mob was coming down the street; the mob did not fear the mouth of the cannon, nor the soldiers of France, but ran down into the face of the fire, killed the soldiers and turned the cannon the other way, and were going on further down. At yonder square stands a little man with his hat off his head, his hand uplifted. He stopped the whole mob. The captain said: "Stop, down there stands a man who has lived a righteous life for sixty years. Let's hear what he has to say." That little man drove the whole mob back because he

recognized the fact that sixty years of righteousness is more powerful than any mob. the Apostle Paul has these facts in mind when he says to Titus: Lead the people to the crib of Bethlehem; show them all the grace of God and all the greatness of God, and fill them with that greatness until they become a power. A man who has love in his heart, will warm up everybody around him; a man who has nothing but frozen icicles in his heart, will chill everybody. A man who is filled with light, is showing others how to live; a man who is filled with darkness, is showing others how to go to destruction. And so I invite you all this evening to step up to this crib and hate sin, and love righteousness, and get filled with a divine enthusiasm that shall make itself felt.

And this divine enthusiasm is sometimes found in men who do not know it. We are told in history, that when the great Caesar was taken captive, they took him out on a vessel conducted by pirates; they took Caesar, the young man, put the chain around his arm, and tied him down to the oar of the galley. Caesar began his first day's work on that pirate ship laughing, telling jokes, declaiming and making himself merry and all around him, until that evening they loosed his chains and permitted him to eat supper with the captain. The next day by his actions already he was the first mate of that little vessel. By showing the people that he understood more about the currents and about the shores and about the paths to the vessels of wealth, I say, they made him mate of that vessel.

The third day he had won over all the soldiers and taken the captain, had taken the chain from his arm and put it around the arm of the captain and tied him down to the galley oar. On the fourth day, as captain of that vessel, he took it as a prize into the Roman harbor. My friends, stop and think what that means. A boy, with nothing except the power that is within him, conquered the pirates on the seas and led them captive into the very harbor of Rome. Caesar as a child of God would have been a power that would have shaken the world. We have some of these powers, if we would simply gather around this Wonder of wonders and live as God wants us to live, and learn as God wants us to learn.

III. Look

And then we ought to look as God wants us to look.

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ.”

Looking for the blessed hope. There is nothing that helps a man along in this world so much as a blessed hope, one great philosopher said: “Yesterday I did not live; Tomorrow I cannot live; today I do live.” My friends, we do not live in the tomorrow; we do not live in the yesterday; we live now, and in the now we are monarchs of three kingdoms: We are kings of the past by memory; we are kings of the present by reason; we are kings of the future by hope. Oh, that blessed hope! Where shall we get it?

Look at the Wonder of all wonders.

The fact that God made the world and gave His only Son to sleep in the crib of Bethlehem, is an evidence that the plan of God will not be perfected until the future, and that this Child shall go home and prepare a home for us. Oh, blessed hope. You may remember today when you were a poor man, with nothing in the world but the dear wife who had united with you for the future. You may remember how, before that marriage day, you looked forward and saw the little home that you would call your own; you saw the vines that you would plant; you saw the clusters of grapes that would grow there; you saw the little cradle that would rock that child that should be born, flesh of your flesh, bone of your bone; and seeing all that in hope, you rolled up your sleeves and went to work. Life would have been a failure, had it not been for the blessed hope that led you onward and upward.

Find Him Who Is Coming To Judge

If you want the blessed hope of eternal life, I say again, you must come to the crib of Bethlehem and see the Wonder of all wonders, and then, when you look at that child, look not only there for the source of all hope, but look there and find Him who is coming to judge the quick and the dead. Paul could not help but glance from the crib to heaven. He thought of the little Child lying here today a span long; and then thought of that Child as a grown up man, entering the ministry, dying on Calvary, ascending to heaven where He is, on the right hand of God; he thought of His coming again with all His holy angels, to raise up all the dead, when we shall stand before him

on that glorious day, and he said, Now when you celebrate Christmas do not forget that day.

Look For The Great God

“Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” And He is the great God. Oh, Wonder of wonders! Ludwig Harms said: “I don’t know which is the greater wonder, the fact that God is so great, or because He became so little.” I do not know whether to feel the more surprised at knowing that God is greater than all the firmaments, or to know that He became so small that His mother held Him on her hand. Here lies all the grace and greatness of God, and this grace and greatness of God has done wonders. What did that little Child do? Heaven so far off that the world could never have found it, those little bands bring heaven down to earth. What has this little Wonder done? The world full of selfishness, by His own denying Himself, and His own immortality. He has made the world go out and say: What can I do for my Master? This Christmas spirit that you see upon the streets, the people thronging up and down the streets of traffic, into the stores, buying and selling, is all but a spark of that great gift of the Son of God, and the unselfishness that His Spirit is bound to plant into the world. He is the great God. What has He done? He has made the impossible possible. God said: The soul that sinneth, it shall die. God cannot lie. Man did sin. Before the human reason of the world it is absolutely impossible that Adam and Eve could be saved, or their offspring, born in sin, and yet this little Wonder of wonders, who cannot lie, can take the truth that the soul that sinneth, it shall die, and can make it possible for the world to be saved, and that is the reason, it is said that the grace of God hath appeared bringing something the world knows nothing about; but the Lord Jesus Christ paid the penalty for your death and mine on Calvary. He was worth it. And now those little hands come and say: Don’t be afraid of Me; I am your God; I am great, but you never are afraid of a little child. Did you ever see a person afraid of a little child? Did you ever see a person afraid of a little babe? Come, ye fathers and mothers. Come, ye fearful and fearless. Come all and gather around this crib. Do not be afraid. Here lies the grace of God, a little babe. Take hold of it; it is the Almighty God, but you don’t need to be afraid. The Son of man is come to

seek and to save that which was lost. Here is your hope, your life. Come live; come learn; come look; come labor.

IV. Labor

Come labor.

“Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us all from iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

The Lord Jesus Christ is not a little, lazy Lord. The fact that He sleeps in the little crib of Bethlehem is no sign that He did not come to work. He did come to labor. The apostle says here, “He gave Himself for us.” Oh, the labor of the Son of God, when He sweat, not only drops of perspiration, as you and I have, but drops of blood. You see the feet of Him who toiled for our salvation, bleeding; you see the hands of Jesus Christ, wounded, so that you can look through them. That is what He did for you and for me. Have you seen the breast pierced with the sword for your salvation and mine? Have you heard His moans and groans on Calvary’s hill, there treading the winepress of God’s wrath all alone? Have you heard Him wooing you with voice of love, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest?” Have you got the meaning of the words: “God so, so, so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life?” Have you heard that cry, after that hard day’s work for all eternity, “It is finished?” What was finished? Your redemption and mine. God labored, my friends. The Wonder of all wonders.

For Us

The Apostle Paul does not refrain from calling attention to himself in connection with others. Who gave Himself for us – for you, Titus, and for me, Paul, and for many other servants of God. He gave this all for us. In other words, they tell me, Titus, that I work too hard, says Paul, in this message this evening, they tell me that I might have escaped this prison if I had simply confessed that I would reject my Savior; I might have been a

lawyer successful financially and otherwise; I might have been a teacher in one of the great universities; it isn't lack of learning nor lack of opportunities that has made me this prisoner; they tell me I should not toil as I am toiling, but I cannot forget, Titus, that my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ bled and died for me, and I cannot help but work; I must work; I am determined to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified; all the powers of hell cannot keep me from working. They say I am peculiar. So are all Christians. "Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." I hope every one in this house will grasp the voice of the Holy Spirit in this, that a Christian is a peculiar man, a peculiar woman. A Christian is a newly born creature in this world. A Christian recognizes that Jesus Christ worked, and worked our salvation out for us; recognizes that he is saved alone by grace; recognizes that in himself he can do absolutely nothing to save himself, and when he gets himself filled with this great truth, saved by all the grace and greatness of the Wonder of wonders, he becomes enthusiastic to do something for the glory of God and for the welfare of man, without any worthiness on his part, and that is the peculiarity of the children of God. Zealous of good works.

How can I leave this subject this evening without asking you the question: Are you really this evening a child of the Wonder of wonders, and if so, are you really engaged in doing something for God's glory? Are you one of the peculiar people of God, that is working as if his very soul's salvation depended upon his works, and at the same time trusting in God for salvation as if his works amounted to nothing? Now I could not be a Christian, to say nothing of being a minister, unless I would do all that I possibly could for the upbuilding of God's kingdom. That is the message that I want to bring to you this evening. If you have been living a lazy, worthless, good-for-nothing life; if you have been living a kind of a treacherous life; if you have been living on the chair of ease and on the pillow of sleep instead of being wide awake and doing whatever God gave you the power and the gifts to do for the kingdom of heaven, I still doubt whether you are a child of God. Do not misunderstand me. Your works are not going to save you, but your doing nothing may damn you. That is what I want to say. Your works will not save you, but your bad deeds may damn you. Remember, my friends, that the law of God not only tells us what to do, but what not to do, and if you do not do what God says you shall do,

you are just as big a sinner as if you do what He said you shall not do. I have almost more respect for an ungodly man who fights for his ungodliness, than I have for a goody-goody Christian who does nothing. The fire of the Holy Spirit and the sparks that came in the grace and the greatness of God at Bethlehem, are enough to kindle the soul, and the brain, and the heart of every man on God's earth, if he simply lets it burn.

And now I wish you all a Merry Christmas, and I wish you the Christ-child, the Wonder of wonders, as you live, love, learn, look and labor until your day's work is done, and God shall call you home. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for this beautiful evening in the temple of God, and for this opportunity which we have had to feast at this holy manger at Bethlehem, and for this great lesson that we have learned at the feet of the great Teacher of all teachers. O Lord, our God, we pray Thee this evening to help us to live as true children of God; help us to look, and to learn, and to labor, as it is Thy will that we should do these things. And we pray Thee, heavenly Father, now that we are going to our respective homes, to remember that we are spending the last Sunday of nineteen hundred and four, and help us to remember that we are now spending the last week for many who shall fall asleep before the bells of the new year shall ring, and if there are any in this house this evening who have heard their last message of God, Oh, do Thou help them to hold fast to this message with all its fullness of the grace and the greatness of God. We pray Thee that Thou wilt lead those who shall live in the coming year, through the threshold of that year as dear children of God, zealous of good works. Give us a strong and living faith in the merits of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and may this Savior occupy our hearts and there make His throne, and rule us in all our thoughts, words and deeds, and when finally our day's work on earth is all done, not for anything that we have done, but alone for Thy mercy's sake, accept us in the name of the beloved Jesus Christ. Amen.

6. Looking Backward. *Sunday After Christmas.*

Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world; but when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Gal. 5:1-7.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL! Not often do we find that there is no Sunday between Christmas and New Year's Day. The Church of God has selected a text for the Sunday between Christmas and New Year. This time that text falls also on New Year's Day. I shall therefore meditate and speak today on the text for the Sunday after Christmas, as well as on the text for New Year's Day. In the first text we will learn how to look backward, and this evening, in the regular New Year's text, we will learn how to look forward. May the Holy Spirit then enlighten us this morning while we consider the theme:

Looking Backward

I shall ask you a number of questions – three main questions and possibly eight or nine others under these main questions

I. Have You Served Your God As You Should The Past Year?

“Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.”

The Apostle Paul wants to show the Galatians that there was a time when the Church of God was under the law, and was looking forward to that time when they should cease to be servants of the law, and become true children of the Gospel. Nevertheless, says he, we must not forget that as children we are under that law and should try to obey it, and therefore I put the question this morning, Looking backward, have you tried to serve your God the past year as you should?

1. Have You Known The Law Of God?

How can we be true servants under the law if we do not know what that law is? The Psalmist began that beautiful first Psalm by saying: Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord. Yes, a true Christian delights in the law of the Lord. I grant that that word “law” in that Psalm does not refer simply to the moral law, but to the teachings of God, but we all do know that the moral law is very comprehensive, and consequently I shall ask you again. In the past year did you know the moral law? Is it true that there may be some sitting before me who cannot repeat the Ten Commandments if asked? It does not seem possible in this enlightened age that that should be true, but I find it true right along. While I was engaged in college work, I was frequently called upon to address the graduating classes in High School, and more than once I found classes with diplomas in their hands who did not know the Ten Commandments. And if the graduates of our high schools in the present day, can so graduate without even knowing the moral law, I am sure that I am safe in asking the question of a large congregation like this, Did you, in 1904, know this law under which you are to serve your God? Did you know that the first three commandments tell you how you are to love your God,

with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength? Did you know that the last seven commandments tell you that you are to love your neighbor as yourself? And did you know that the first table of the law told you not only who God was, but how you should not take His name in vain; and on the other hand, how you should try to keep the Sabbath Day holy? Did you know your duty to your father and to your mother? Did you know your duty to those older than you? Did you know that you were to love everybody and not hate any one, and if you did, that you were a murderer? Did you know that you should live a pure life, so that on the Judgment Day you need not stand before your own wife and children in shame? Did you know that you were not to take things not your own? Did you know it was wrong to tell a single thing that is not true? Did you know that even the desire to have what you never should have, is all wrong in God's sight? Did you know that if you are living an ungodly life you are bringing a curse down upon your children for three or four generations to come; and on the other hand, if you are living a righteous life, you are bringing down a blessing on your children for thousands of generations? Did you know that you yourself may have a curse resting upon you that was brought down by an ungodly great-great-grandfather; and that on the other hand, you may have a blessing resting upon you that came from your father and mother, or your grandfather and grandmother, for two hundred and fifty years back, yea, for a thousand generations? Looking backward, did you know God's moral law?

2. Have You Meditated On That Law?

Not only do I want to know whether you knew it, but whether you meditated on that law. In that Psalm which I just quoted, it is said that the Godly man meditates upon that law day and night. How could he meditate on that law in the dark if he did not know it? Why did he meditate on that law? Because he knew it was just; because he knew it was right; because he knew it would help to make him a better man. I am afraid too many people do not think of the Ten Commandments enough. We even have trouble to get our Sunday Schools to say them once a week. It would seem we have forgotten that God wants that law said, not only once a week, but every day, on the ends of our fingers, on the door posts, everywhere. I am afraid we are not meditating, enough on God's holy law. The other day I stepped into

our county jail and saw three boys sitting on a bench. I said: "Good morning, boys, what's the matter? Been going to Sunday School too much?" and then they laughed.

"No," one said, "that is just the trouble; we didn't go enough."

But one said, "I used to go to Brother Gamber's class."

I said "Did Brother Gamber teach you to come here and spend your time behind these bars?"

"No sir, he taught us better."

"Why didn't you stay in his class?"

"We didn't want to."

What had they been doing? Robbing the Salvation Army boxes. They did not meditate on God's law enough. That was the trouble. I want you to understand that if you have got the Ten Commandments in your homes, repeated every morning at the table, repeated every day by your children; if they will sit there at home for ten or twelve years and say every day that God says Thou shalt not steal, conscience will not allow the boy to go and rob the church boxes of the First Lutheran Church, or the Salvation Army boxes. The great trouble of the present day is that we are not paying enough attention to the Ten Commandments; we do not meditate on that holy law; we let the world go on and think the children are smart because they go to high school, and the high school has many corrupt boys and girls, and the world knows it. They are not meditating on God's holy law enough. How have you spent the year 1904, meditating on God's holy law?

3. How Did You Keep That Law?

Not only do I ask you how you meditated on it, but how did you keep that law? What effort did you make in the past year to keep the law perfectly as you could? When the great ruler of England was known as the little Prince of Wales, he was put under a governess; at the age of six years he had a little lesson to learn every day. The governess said to him one day: "Edward, have you got your lesson?"

"No," He was playing.

She said: "You go right to work and get your lesson first, and then you can play."

Little Edward said: "I don't want to study today," but the governess said, "You must study, Edward."

“But I don’t want to study.”

“You go and stand right in that corner.”

“I will not stand in the corner.”

She said, “You must stand in the corner.”

Little Edward got angry and struck through the window and broke the glass, and said, “I want you to understand that I am the Prince of Wales.” Then the governess called in his father; the father took the little boy and led him over to the table, opened the Bible and read the first two verses of Galatians 4: “Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.” Then the father took the little ruler and scutched him well, handed him over to the governess and said, “You give him another scutching,” then placed him in the corner and said, “I want you to understand there is no difference between you and a servant, though you are the Prince of Wales; you stand there and study your lesson, and when you get to be king, I want you to understand you are still under God’s law.”

You understand what I mean when I say to you this morning. Have you tried to keep God’s holy law throughout the past year, or have you, like the little stubborn Prince of Wales, thought you could do as you pleased with God’s holy law? Examine yourselves this morning.

Looking backward, has God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost been your only God, or have you been worshiping Baal? Have you uttered an oath during the past year? If so, let us stop a moment and ask God to forgive you. How have you spent the fifty-two Sundays of 1904? Where have you been? Have you kept the Sabbath Day holy? Have you helped to spread God’s kingdom? You tell me that you only missed now and then because you were tired. Tired! Others of us are not tired, are we? Others of us are not doing anything, are we? Who in this church has labored more hours in 1904 than your pastor? Did you find him away from the pulpit because he was tired? Did you find him sleeping because it was Sunday morning? The President of the United States last Thursday evening went to prayer meeting. He runs the United States and has got time to go to prayer meeting, but you, with your little peanut stand, cannot find time. Shame on you. How have you spent your Lord’s Days? How have you treated your father and mother? Last night I was trying to meditate more fully on this text, and the thought came to me. When did you write your stepmother last?

Do you know I could not do another thing with my sermon until I wrote her a letter, and then the Lord helped me again. It may be that you have left your old father and mother sit down and worry for weeks because you wouldn't even write. What have you done with God's law in 1904? How often have you had a feeling even toward those that have been praying for you, a feeling that hasn't been right, a feeling of hatred, of wishing they were out of the way? Oh, the treacherous hearts that dwell in our breasts. We are not to kill, and yet we think that we can have murder in our hearts and love that murder. How have you kept God's law? Has your life been pure? Have you sinned against your husband? Have you sinned against your wife? Have you sinned against your fellow men? Have you lived chaste and pure in word and deed? Is all that you possess yours by right, or did you simply take it because the law allowed it? Have you told the truth? Examine yourselves this morning. Have you kept God's holy law in 1904?

II. Were You God's True Children In The Past Year?

This leads me to another question. Were you God's true children in the past year?

“But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

1. Were You True Children Of God?

I ask you the question on the basis of these two verses: Were you true children of God during the past year? Did you know that Jesus Christ was born under the very law that condemns you? I know every one of you feels condemned this morning. I feel condemned myself. This law that I have been speaking to you about this morning is so holy and so perfect that no man on earth can say I have kept it fully. There is not a just man on earth that doeth good and sinneth not, says the Holy Word. Feeling that we are condemned under that law, did you know that Jesus Christ was born under that very law that condemns you? Did you know that when the holy angels

sang over the crib of Bethlehem, Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men, that not only the angels were over that crib, but the law of God was over it, and Christ Himself was born under the law that He Himself gave, which demanded perfection?

2. Did You Know That Jesus Christ Died Under That Law That You Might Live?

Let me ask you another question: Did you know that Jesus Christ, born under that law, died under that law that you might live? It is said here “to redeem them that were under the law.” Jesus Christ was born under that law, that He might bear that law for you and for me, and in as much as that Holy law on you and on me said of every one of us, They are guilty, we are condemned, Christ with us, not because the sin was His, but because He put His shoulder under your sins and under mine, and that law which condemns you and me, drove Him to Calvary; that law put the crown of thorns upon His head; that law scourged His back; that law pierced His hands and His feet; that law hanged Him up between heaven and earth; His feet dared not touch the earth, because the earth did not want Him; His crown did not dare to reach heaven because the curse of God was on Him; the law over Him and the curse under Him and around Him, held Him fast on Calvary’s hill. Did you know in 1904 that Jesus Christ, born in the crib of Bethlehem, was held fast by His own law, and paid the debt for your sins and for mine, and thus redeemed us? “To redeem them that were under the law.”

3. Did You Permit Jesus Christ To Fully Adopt You As His Dear Children?

Let me ask you: Did you permit Jesus Christ in the past year to fully adopt you as His dear children? What kind of a life have you been living the past year? There is a great difference after all between a servant and a son. In one respect, says the Apostle Paul, there is no difference. A son, as long as he is a child, is like the servant, under tutors and governors, but the time comes, my friends, when there is a difference between Isaac and Ishmael. The time comes when Ishmael must be thrown out because he is not a true son of Sarah; the time when Isaac stays in the home because he is a true

child; and so I come to you this morning and ask you, Did the Lord Jesus Christ fully adopt you as His child? “That we might receive the adoption of sons.” when you were baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, then Jesus Christ adopted you, and from that moment until this you have been an adopted child. I do not say you have been a good child. Sometimes adopted children act very ugly, but they are still adopted children. The moment I adopt a son by law he is my son, no difference what he does, and so the moment you were baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, you were adopted by the Lord, and He thereby made a covenant that He will be a Father to you, and He will care for you and watch over you, and if you have gone away you must come back, and repent, and He will accept the adopted son again. My question is: In 1904 were you adopted or were you not? Must you still say, I have no covenant with God at all; I am still loose from Him; I am still ungodly? Look backward this morning and ask yourself the question. How have I lived in the three hundred and sixty-five days of 1904?

III. Were You True Heirs Of All God’s Riches?

I come to you with a third question, and it is this: Were you, in the past year, true heirs of all of God’s riches? “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” Oh, what riches God has in store for us! If we cease to be servants and become sons, then we shall fall heir with Jesus Christ to all the riches of God. I ask you therefore the question again: Were you heirs of all of God’s riches during the past year?

1. Have You Been Filled With The Holy Spirit By Making Good Use Of The Means Of Grace?

My first question, in order to lead you to the right answer, will be this: Have you been filled with the Holy Spirit in 1904? It is said here that the Spirit of His Son shall be in our hearts. The Spirit of the Son of God is the Holy Spirit; and now have you, during the past year, made good use of the means of grace? You understand that the Holy Spirit does not come flying through

the air; He does not come independent of His Word. I meet with people who seem to think that the Holy Spirit will make Christians, no difference if they do not hear the Word of God. I challenge any Christian on earth, to show me anywhere, a person in history or by sight that was ever brought to God any other way than by the Word of God. We heard last Thursday evening that Jesus Christ promised that He would send a Comforter, who should remind the people of what He had said. That is the message of the Holy Spirit. The means of grace, therefore, are the Word of God, either purely preached, or associated by promise with the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, and with water in Holy Baptism. There is no other way that the Holy Spirit will ever come to man. I do not care where you point, in the Bible or in history, when the Holy Spirit comes to man. He comes through the Word. On the day of Pentecost, when He came with mighty power and fire, the apostle Peter, in order that the people might not be misled, said: "Now is fulfilled the promise made by Joel," to show them that He came through the Word of God. The Word of God, therefore, must be heard, if you would have the Holy Spirit, now, in the year 1904, were you hungry for God's Word? When Sunday morning came did you feel, I must go to the church and hear that message of God? When Sunday evening came did you feel, I must go if I possibly can and hear more of God's eternal truth? And if you were not baptized yourself did you feel in your heart, I must now make that covenant with my God? And when the Holy Supper was celebrated did you feel that you must be at God's altar and receive Him, His body and His blood shed for the remission of sins? Oh. were you filled with the Holy Ghost in 1904?

2. Did You Pray From The Heart?

Did you pray from the heart? I am not asking you now whether you prayed with a prayer book or without. I have heard that question debated for the last twenty-five years, and there are some people who think it is wrong to pray from a prayer book, and there are others who think it is a good deal better. I want to say to you, my friends, that a man can pray, just as formally without a book as with one, and that man can pray just as spiritually with a book as without one. The question is not whether you have a prayer book or not; the question is simply this, when you pray, do you simply pray with your mouth, do you simply pray a form, or do you pray from the heart, with

the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ in you? That is the question, and consequently I want to know, looking backward, have your prayers for the past year been heart prayers? Must I hear the answer come from some of you, I didn't pray at all? I fear that is only too often true. I fear that some people walk right on through life, from one New Year to the other, and have no communion with God at all. Oh, may the Holy Spirit this day enter the hearts of all His children, teaching them at least to say Abba, Father. There are others who, though they do pray, pray simply as a matter of form; they can sit down and pray at the table and never think of God; they can run over their form even in a prayer meeting or elsewhere, and their minds are not on God, but simply on the form. What I want to know is not whether you have not prayed at all, it is not whether you have simply run over words, but I want to know whether there has been, in the year 1904, a Spirit in your heart that was the Spirit of Christ, that gave you an uneasiness that could not express itself, that made you feel that you must flee from the crowd, and go into the little chamber and close the door, and pour out your heart to God with a cry, silent as it is, that must rap at the very throne of heaven. Is that the kind of prayers you have had in the past year? It is expressed in the words of our text in these words: "The Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying." Oh, my friends, it is not so much whether you cry with your eyes or not, but did you ever cry with your hearts? Has your poor heart ever felt that if God does not speak, you cannot speak? Has your poor heart felt that it must have an utterance to bring true joy to the soul? Prayer, just like language, as far as the words are concerned, must be learned. When you first began to talk, about all you could do was to say "pa," "ma;" in time there was great love and great joy in the home because you learned to say "papa," "mamma;" and in time you even went further and said, "mamma, bread," "papa, bread," and the whole family said, "Look at our little dear one, how he or she is learning to talk." Now you can go home and can talk for hours but you learned word by word. The Holy Spirit in the heart of man does not make him a John Stark or a Spener in a single day. The Holy Spirit in the heart of man at first just makes him feel that he would like to say something and doesn't know what; pretty soon he will say, "Ab," then "Abba," and pretty soon, "Abba, Father," and I want to say to you that that little prayer, "Abba Father, Amen," is worth a good deal more than the prayers of some people an hour in length with nothing in them. "Abba,

Father.” Oh, let me urge upon you all this morning, look backward and ask yourself the question, How did I pray in the past year?

4. Did You Become Heirs Of All God’s Wealth?

Did you become heirs of all of God’s wealth? In other words, did Jesus Christ become your full Brother the past year? “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” Oh, the riches of the true children! Spurgeon said one time: “Great is the wealth of the man that can say, ‘My God is my Father.’” I have sitting before me today people who are well-to-do, and people who are poor, and I would have you to understand that no difference how great your poverty, if you have been a true child of Jesus Christ this year, with the Holy Spirit in you, you have been an heir – an heir of all that belongs to Jesus Christ; and Jesus Christ being the only Son of God, is the only heir of heaven, and Christ is only too willing to say to you. Thou shalt be My brother; thou shalt be My sister. Oh, how rich I would be this morning if I were the only son of Andrew Carnegie. It is silly to talk about being so poor. I am a son of Jesus Christ, a thousand times richer than a thousand Andrew Carnegies. Therefore, looking backward this morning, I will ask you, in all your sorrows did you remember the sorrows of your older Brother? Undoubtedly some of you have passed through some very sad experiences in 1904. It may be that afflictions came over you such as you never witnessed before; it may be that you felt pains in your hands and in your hearts that you never dreamed of before, but while those pains were penetrating your heart, did you think of the time when your Brother’s heart was pierced? Did you think of the days when His head was crowned with thorns? You are to become an heir of His. Did you rejoice that you were permitted to suffer a little with Him?

But some of you have not only had sorrows during the past year, but you have had exceeding great joy. There are some in this house this morning that have experienced a nearness to God such as they never had before; there are some who have been lifted throne-ward so close that they could hear, as it were, the very songs of the angels. In all your rejoicings and all your pleasures, did you think of the joy of your Elder Brother sitting at the right-hand of God, waiting for the day when the final distribution shall be made, when the King of kings and Lord of lords shall stand before all His

brothers and all His sisters and with outstretched arms say. The kingdom of heaven is Mine, and it is yours, because I adopted you? May this joy lift us all heavenward this morning.

Looking backward, let us not forget, in conclusion, that, looking downward, there are still, at the end of 1904, some of our own who are still outside the kingdom of God. How sad, on New Year's Day, for one to know that he is not yet adopted; for one to know that he is not yet fully reconciled to God. Now it seems to me it would be a mistake for this large audience to pass out of these doors today without passing into the door of eternal life. I therefore invite you all to Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, who is here in this very moment to save you, and with outstretched hands of love says: "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked should turn from his evil way and live." "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." And then, my friends, you will have the happiest New Year in your history. Amen.

7. Looking Forward. *New Year.*

But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. 3:23-29.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

I WISH I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY tonight, on this first evening of the new year, to reach every ear in the world, and, having reached every ear in the world with this message, I would further wish that every one would accept the message and be saved. Possibly I have a right to thank my God that I have as many hearers tonight as I have, and surely all the honor belongs – not to me – but to my God who has brought you here, and if I shall simply have the knowledge in the future that this sermon was the means of bringing those who did hear it, into closer communion with their God, I shall always be thankful to Him. I wish you all a happy New Year, but remember that such happiness as I wish you can never be obtained until you accept my Savior and your Savior, Jesus Christ. This morning we dwelt for some time on the theme, Looking Backward; this evening I ask you to look forward. May the Holy Spirit bless us while we are

Looking Forward

There are several things I wish you to remember as you are looking forward tonight:

I. By Nature You Are Under The Law Of God

“But before faith came, we were kept under the law.” This was true of Israel of old, that before faith came they were under the law, and it is true of every individual. In Old Testament times the law was preeminent, but let us not for a moment imagine that there was no Gospel in the Old Testament, nor that there is no law in the New. The Old Testament has the law and the Gospel; the New Testament has the law and the Gospel, and what I would have you to remember as you are looking forward in 1905 is this, that the law of God is over you. And when I speak of the law of God, I mean that law which God wrote into the heart of Adam when he was created; I mean that law of old which the people nearly forgot until the Lord God wrote it again on stone and said, Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy. That was only one part of the great law of God that is over man. The law of God that was written into the heart of Adam, and was given to Moses about thirty-five hundred years ago is the same law that is naturally over you and me, and it will be over us throughout the coming year. Throughout the coming year it is your duty to know that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is the only true and living God. Throughout the coming year it is your duty to know that you have no right to curse, swear, conjure, lie or deceive by the name of God. Throughout the coming year it is your duty to know that you have no right to despise the preaching of the Gospel and the Holy Word, but that God demands of you to remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy. Throughout the year 1905, whenever you misspend Sunday, the Lord’s Day, I want you to remember that God’s holy law is right down over you, saying, Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. I would have you to understand that every time you step outside of the path of rectitude, living an immoral life, God’s holy law covers you and says, Thou shalt not commit adultery. The same law says, Thou shalt not kill. The same law says, Thou shalt not steal. The same law says, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. The same law says, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbor’s. That same law thunders in your ears every day of 1905, I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands

of them that love me and keep my commandments. That law will be over you.

II. The Law Will Condemn You

Not only will that law be over you, but I call your attention to the fact, while looking forward, that it will condemn you. I am speaking of the man that expects to be saved by the law. It will condemn you just as sure as you are an imperfect being, and this law is perfect. This law is so perfect that none but Jesus Christ has ever kept it perfectly. It is so perfect that if you break one point of it, you break it all. James said of this holy law. He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all. If you keep nine of these commandments perfectly, and simply break one of them, you have broken that whole law of God. That may not be plain to some people, but it ought to be plain to all. I have ten fingers on these two hands, just as the two tables of the law had ten commandments. How many of these fingers do you have to cut off to hurt me? Ten of them? Nine of them? No. Cutting off one finger brings the blood from my heart; and the law of God all centers in the heart of God, in one word, and that word is love. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself, and you cannot injure your neighbor in any of the seven ways, nor your God in any of the three ways, without touching the heart of love, and consequently have offended against that law. And this law is a just law; it is a law that never gives a single inch for anything; it demands perfection, and will condemn every one of us. Listen to the Word of God:

“Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid; for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”

In other words, I would have you to understand while you are looking forward, that if you die in the year 1905 and expect to be saved because of your goodness, that you are going to be damned just as sure as God ever gave the law. The law of God never saved a man for the reason that he is imperfect, and the law demands perfection.

III. The Law Will Keep Hold Of You Until You Have Been Brought To Christ

I call your attention to the fact, as you are looking forward, that this law not only is over you, and condemns you, but that it will, throughout the year, hold you, and keep hold of you until you have been brought to Christ and saved.

“But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.”

This law is not only over us and around us, but it is all around us, and closes us up, and holds us until we shall be led to Christ. No man on earth can get away from this law. A man may commit a crime in Mansfield and go to San Francisco, but there is one thing he can never do, he cannot tear the law out of his heart, and that is where God first put it; and if he should be able to tear it out of his heart, he cannot tear it out of the Judgment Day, nor out of the Word of God, nor out of the conscience of the people. That law holds a man wherever he goes and shuts him up, and never will let him go until he comes to Him who fulfilled that law for him.

IV. This Law Will Try Very Hard To Lead You To Jesus Christ

I also call your attention to the fact that this law, as you are looking forward, will try very hard to lead you to Jesus Christ.

“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

This law is the schoolmaster. Did you ever stop to think, my friends, that there is just as much love in God’s law as there is in the Gospel? The sum and substance of the Ten Commandments is love, but the love in the law demands justice, while the love in the Gospel pays the debt of the justice in

the law, and offers you salvation. In other words, the law condemns and the Gospel brings salvation. But, my friends, this law has got so much love in it that it wants to show you just exactly what you are and show you how to escape the sin that is within you. In some portions of the Scriptures this law is likened unto a mirror. A man may be walking along on the street during the day and imagine his face is just as clean as it was in the morning; he comes home in the evening, and, to his surprise, on looking into the mirror, he finds out that one side of his face, or possibly both, are black. How did he find it out? By looking into the mirror and seeing himself. The reason we have so many people who think they are so perfect, and so white in character, and never commit any wrong that may take them to destruction, is because they do not look at this moral law over them and around them, but simply keep their eyes closed and go on through life, and never test themselves in this great mirror God has placed around us. The Psalmist said, I will meditate on Thy law day and night. He knew there was no time in life, day or night, in which a man should not be able to see himself in that law. I may think I am a pretty good man, preaching every Sunday, until I look at the law which says, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy," which shows what a black face I have got. I may think I am a pretty good man, although mistreating father and mother, until I look into the very first commandment on the second table of the law, which says. Honor thy father and mother, that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth; therefore, if I have not treated father and mother rightly, my soul is black. And so I can look into every commandment, and I say there is not a soul standing before me tonight, looking into this Divine law, that must not confess, I am a poor sinner. What shall I do? What shall I do? Then comes the law and says, I will tell you what I do? I will take you as the schoolmaster; I will take you where you can get help; I want you to understand that I have got hold of you, and I will keep hold of you until I bring you to Jesus Christ; and when you are brought over to Jesus Christ, I am still going to keep hold of you until you are justified.

V. We Must Be Justified By Faith

And that brings me to another point while looking forward. "That we might be justified by faith." We must be justified, no difference how much wrong

we have done in this world. I would have you to understand that no sin can enter heaven. I would have you to understand that the smallest sin you ever committed would damn you forever if it were not forgiven. I would have you to understand that God never lies, and God says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," and we all did sin. Now how can a man, condemned by the law, having sinned, ever be justified? Possibly I can make that clear by an illustration. If I owe \$1,000 to some grocery man here in the city, and I have not got a dollar to my name, and possibly never can earn a cent, there is only one way that grocery man can justify me, and that is, if I have a friend who will step up and say, "Here are a thousand dollars to pay Mr. Long's debt," what right has that grocery man to charge me with another thousand, if my friend has paid it for me? That is the only way any man on earth can ever be justified. We are all guilty before the law. The law is the schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. The law comes, like a policeman, and says, "I will never let you go until you are justified."

VI. The Lord Jesus Christ Has A Way To Justify Us

Then we come to the Lord Jesus Christ, and He has got a way to justify us. Looking forward in 1905, I want you to understand that the only way you can be justified is by faith. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." In the year 1517, when the great Reformation began, nearly everybody thought then the way to be justified was by works. It was in those dark ages the people would leave their homes and walk down to Rome, and stand in the snow for weeks, to get forgiveness of sins. It was in those days that Dr. Luther himself thought he would get forgiveness of sins by climbing up the stairway of Pontius Pilate down at Rome. It was in that way that we got the celebrated painting of the people that went down to Rome whipping themselves until the blood flowed from their backs. It was in that way that St. Peter's Church was built. It was in those days they sold indulgences, the forgiveness of sins for money. It was in those days that people thought they could get forgiveness of sins by their works and earnings. Dr. Luther, who found the Bible in the Library at Erfurt, discovered in many pages of this Book that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law, and when

climbing up that stairway at Rome, trying to get forgiveness of sins by his works, the truth flashed into his soul that you cannot get forgiveness by climbing on your knees; you cannot get forgiveness of sins by what you can do; it is on account of the mercy of our God. Then he took hold of this great truth, that Jesus Christ on Calvary has paid the debt, and that the way to get salvation is to hold to Him by faith. I have no time tonight to dwell at length upon this great truth, but I will say in one word, that the central truth of Christ's Church, and the central truth of all peace of soul is this, that I am saved alone by faith in Jesus Christ. Let me urge upon you then, throughout the year 1905, to give up your self-righteousness; to give up your life of the old Pharisee; take hold of Christ and Him only, and when the law, the great schoolmaster, discovers that you have taken hold of Jesus Christ, then the law, the schoolmaster, lets you go, and no sooner. Mark what I tell you, you never can get away from the law and Christ at the same time. If you are going to hold fast to the law, Christ lets you go; if you take hold of Christ, the law lets you go. If you hold to the law you will be condemned; if you hold to Christ the law has got to let you go, because He paid your debt. That is so plain no man can misunderstand. It is justification by faith, and that is what I want you all to have throughout the year 1905; then you can say, as Paul said in one of the epistles to the Romans, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God," and you never can have peace any other way. As long as you are going to depend upon your own goodness every day your own goodness will condemn you and you have no peace, but here I am, a poor sinner, the chief of all sinners; I find no peace in my sins, but I find it in my great Savior, and so you can find peace in Jesus Christ.

"But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

Someone may say. What do you mean by faith? I have heard so much about faith all my life, and yet I don't know what it means. Let me make plain what faith is. It is not only knowledge, not only assent, but confidence. I know of no better illustration of faith than the old one given by the fathers. If you were this morning to stand at a window in an upper story and the house were burning, and the only way of escape would be to leap out of that window – Now, to know there is a man standing below who says, Leap into my arms and I will catch you, is knowledge; that would not help you; you

might stand there and burn to death, knowing that a man was standing below to catch you. You might also make up your mind that this man below is strong enough to catch you, but even that would not save you. What would save you? The only thing that would save you would be to leap from the window and let him catch you, – and that is confidence. A man may know there is a Savior, Jesus Christ, and be damned; that is not faith. A man may know that Jesus Christ can save; that is not faith. The thing to do is to leap into the arms of Jesus, and trust Him. “In my hands no price I bring. Simply to Thy cross I cling.” That is peace. Finding Jesus Christ by faith, we have peace with God.

VII. Faith in Jesus Christ and Holy Baptism are inseparable

When you have that kind of faith, then look forward, and I will call your attention to another great truth, and that is that faith in Jesus Christ, and Holy Baptism are inseparable.

“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

When I say baptism and faith in Christ are inseparable, I do not mean to say that no man ever yet was saved who wasn't baptized. We do know that in Old Testament times men were saved because they were circumcised instead of baptized; and we do know that the thief on the cross was not baptized when Christ said to him, “Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise.” But I do know, on the other hand, that when Jesus Christ blessed little children by laying His hands upon them, or when He looked over to the man hanging on the cross and said, “Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise,” that He gave to the children and to that man all that He can give you and me in holy baptism. I do know that Jesus Christ did lay down the command to go into all the world, to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned, baptized or not baptized. Once in a while we hear people say, Will I be lost? I believe in Christ but I am not baptized. Now,

pray tell me, how can you believe in Christ and not be baptized? You say, the thief on the cross believed in Christ and was not baptized, but I am talking to the thief that is off of the cross, not to the one that was on the cross. That man on the cross could not get down, but you can be baptized. What I want to know is this, if you believe in Christ, and He says, “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost,” how can you refuse to obey Him, and say you believe in Him? What I maintain is this, that faith in Jesus Christ and Holy Baptism are inseparable. In other words, just as soon as you believe in Jesus Christ, you want to be baptized, and will be baptized the first opportunity you get, and when you are baptized, you have put on Christ, and having put on Christ, in the sight of God the Father you are as holy, not in yourself but in Christ, as Christ Himself. Understand me, I do not say that you will ever be as holy as Christ is, but I do say when you put on Christ, that in the sight of God, justified by faith, He looks upon you as if you were Christ Himself, and consequently you have peace with God, and you have salvation.

VIII. When You Have Put On Christ, You Are Just As Good A Christian As Any Other On Earth

“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

You will understand the next point I want to give you, looking forward in 1905, is this, that when you have put on Christ and have faith in Him, that you are then just as good a Christian as any other Christian in the world.

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”

There is a good deal said these days about the church of the poor, and the church of the rich; about the church of the common people and the church of the aristocrat. I want to say right here that I never saw an aristocratic Jesus in my life; I never saw an aristocratic Savior in my life. What I understand by a Christian is that when he is a Christian he has put on Jesus

Christ, and wherever he goes he has Christ on him, and is just as much as any other man that has Jesus Christ on him. Whenever I see anyone, a member of the Christian Church, too proud to mingle with the people, too proud to mingle with the colored people in God's Holy Church, I would not give very much for his Christianity, because it hasn't very much Christ in it. There is only one Christian in the world, and that one Christian is neither Jew nor Greek; is neither rich nor poor; is neither high nor low; that one Christian is inside of Christ's righteousness, and His righteousness makes the poorest black man on earth white, as much as the richest white king on earth. Whenever we learn these great truths, we can look forward with joy and pleasure for the coming year.

IX. When You Have Become One In Christ Jesus, You Are One Of The Richest Heirs Of God

The final thought I would give you, looking forward, is this, that when you have become one in Christ Jesus, you are one of the richest heirs of God, too rich ever to be able to count your riches.

“And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

Abraham was not a very poor man when God first called him. You will remember the Bible says that he and Lot were rich in gold and silver and cattle, but it was not the gold and silver and the cattle that made them really rich; the great riches was this, that God called Abraham and told him that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed, and any one who understands the Bible knows very well that that seed was to be none other than Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ Himself being the only heir of heaven owns all things; heaven and earth are His; yea, ye are not your own, ye have been bought with a price. When the poorest man on earth has put on Jesus Christ, then he has the wealth of the world. Oh, that I had the tongue to tell the world this great truth of the wealth that is in Jesus Christ. Any man tonight in Mansfield or elsewhere, who is living without Christ is poor – poor tonight, and, if he refuses to be saved, will be poor in the hour of

death, poor on the Judgment Day, poor in hell. The man who accepts Jesus Christ, if he has no garment on his back, if he has no bite to eat, if he has not a foot of ground to his name, is unspeakably rich, so rich that if he had to die like poor Lazarus, to be eaten by the dogs, he would find rest in Abraham's bosom, an heir of Christ, the promised seed of Abraham. May God give to you these riches, is my prayer.

In conclusion, next Sunday we shall receive into this Church by confirmation and letter, a small congregation of its own. A week from Friday evening I am again ready to start a new class to show them more fully the way of salvation. These are opportunities that you do not get everywhere, for some ministers of the Gospel will not go to the trouble to do what I would do and what some others would do, to make clear to you the way of salvation. If I were to charge you five dollars a night and promise you salvation you would come running, but when I offer to teach you the way of eternal salvation for nothing and spend my time and labor, you do not know whether you want it or not. I said last New Year's day, and I have said it ever since I have been in the ministry, that some who are listening to me today will never hear another New Year's sermon. Some of you must decide within the next few months whether you are going to accept Christ or forever reject Him. My prayer is that one week from Friday night, when the opportunity is given you, not one in this church tonight who is not baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, who has not been more fully instructed in the saving knowledge of God, will stay away, but come. Come, if you have to walk on crutches. Come if you have to climb on hands and feet. But you do not need to do that. If you cannot come to me, I will come to you. There is no excuse. I want to so preach that on that last great day, if you are lost, you must acknowledge that you might have been saved, but you would not. May God, the Father in heaven, bless this message tonight, as we are going through the portals of the New Year; may He lead us every hour and every day, and when our hour shall come to pass out of this world, may there be a glorious jubilee in heaven, going home to enjoy the riches of the seed of Abraham. Amen.

Prayer

God; our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the message of the hour; we pray Thee to apply it to the hearts and souls of all here tonight with Thy Holy Spirit. We ask Thee that Thou wilt make Thy servant thankful for the many hands that are ready to lift up his arms in the work he has to do. O God, we thank Thee for the many prayers that are constantly ascending for his physical as well as his mental and moral strength. We pray Thee, O God, that Thou wilt bring into the ministry true and good friends throughout the coming year. We pray Thee that Thou wilt visit the homes of the poor, with all that is necessary for the sustenance of life. We pray Thee that Thou wilt help us to remember that if we will not work we shall not eat. We ask Thee that Thou wilt help that Thy Word may find true lodging in the hearts and souls of all these people assembled in this church tonight. Help us in the coming Sunday to be found in Thy temple. And may Thy Word be blessed to our souls in our own homes. May we feed on Thy truth and thrive on Thy knowledge and grace. We ask Thee now to prepare every soul for that coming celebration of Thy Holy Supper on the following Sunday, and if any of us shall be called from time into eternity before another Lord's Day shall appear, may we fall asleep in Jesus Christ. We pray Thee now that Thou wilt give us that faith which we now confess:

I believe in God the Father Almighty Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; The third day He arose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the Right hand of God the Father Almighty, from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

8. The Present Judgment.

Sunday After New Year.

Beloved think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator. 1 Peter 4:12-19.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

YOU HAVE LEFT YOUR HOMES this evening and come to the house of God. It may be that you have left a dear father, or a dear mother, or some dear children, or some dear friend in that home. What if this very moment there should be a thundering and a roaring, and a rolling back of the clouds, and the Son of God should come, with all His holy angels to call you to the Judgment! What if this very moment the dead should all arise in their graves, even those over whom it was said this afternoon, "Earth to earth; ashes to ashes; dust to dust!" What if in the next moment you are commanded to stand on the one side or the other of the Lord Jesus Christ in all His glory! That is the judgment that is coming, but let us not forget that there is a judgment going on this evening, without any imagination; let us not forget that there is a judgment going on every morning, and that is the

Present Judgment

“For the time is come that the judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”

In the present Judgment, what are the results?

- I. The righteous will scarcely be saved.
- II. The mere professors are not saved.
- III. The ungodly have a terrible future before them.

I. The Righteous Will Scarcely Be Saved

There are many people who seem to think it is such an easy thing to be a Christian; that it is such an easy thing to become saved. I think it is a good deal as a certain person told me. He said, “I used to think it was an easy thing to be a Christian, but somehow I find it is a pretty hard thing to be a Christian.” Those people who think it an easy thing are not Christians at all, or they wouldn’t talk that way. It is a hard thing to be a Christian, and the present judgment decides that the righteous will scarcely be saved. If the righteous will scarcely be saved, what is going to become of the ungodly?

1. Who Are The Righteous?

In the first place the righteous are those who have fully discovered that, they have no righteousness of their own. There is no righteous man on earth that is a moralist; there is no righteous man on earth that thinks he is going to get to heaven because he is righteous; there is no righteous man on earth that thinks he has never sinned; there is no righteous man on earth that thinks he can get along without Holy Baptism; there is no righteous man on earth that thinks he can get along without the Lord’s Supper; there is no righteous man on earth that thinks he does not need to be a church member; there is no righteous man on earth that thinks he is partly a good man and only needs a little help to be saved. The truth is that a man is born in sin, and by nature is a child of wrath, and there is no goodness in him at all by nature. “Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags” says the great Lord God,

who knows. “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” And unless a man has learned this great lesson that by nature he has absolutely no righteousness at all, he never can be a righteous man. Then how shall a man who knows himself to be so totally unrighteous, ever become righteous?

A righteous man is one who accepts the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. No one will question for a single moment the fact that Jesus Christ was perfect; even His enemies will admit He was one of the best men that ever lived; everywhere He is held up in history as the model for all humanity to follow. It is not hard to see that Jesus Christ was either the Son of God, or He was not a good man. Jesus Christ claimed that He was the Son of God; that He was equal with the Father. Either that was true or it was not. If it was not true, then Jesus Christ did not tell the truth and was not a good man. If it was true, then He was the Son of God, and as the Son of God He was perfect, the God-man; and as God-man He perfectly kept this law, and consequently was perfect righteousness itself. The Lord Jesus Christ then having perfect righteousness in Himself, having paid for your sins and mine on Calvary’s hill, thereby wrought out our salvation, and by faith offers His righteousness to us, and faith is the hand with which we grasp His righteousness. Therefore, if we have discovered that we have no righteousness of our own, are fully persuaded that we are poor, lost and condemned sinners, we cry out, “What must I do to be saved?” And we hear the answer, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house,” and we accept that promise as our own, then His righteousness becomes ours and we have an imputed righteousness, not an inborn righteousness, and the man that has the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ is a righteous man, and the only righteous man on God’s earth.

2. Why Will He Scarcely Be Saved?

Having learned who is a righteous man, the question arises. *Why is it that he will scarcely be saved?* “And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” In the first place it is because he fears the short fiery trials of Christians.

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.”

Here we have a picture of the trials and sufferings that the Apostle Peter knew were coming upon the people. Remember that Peter wrote this epistle in the days of Nero, when that tyrant had his foot upon the neck of the people of Asia Minor; in the days when fires were kindled everywhere to burn men because they were followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, says the Apostle Peter, I do not want you to think it is an easy thing to be a Christian; you may pass through fires of all kinds; but I would have you to remember, says he, that these very fires that you endure are only for a short time, and then will come the greatest glory; because you have suffered with Christ you shall also enjoy His great glory; but, says Peter, just because these fiery trials are before your very eyes, I fear some of you, though you are righteous, will turn back and not be faithful. Oh, that we all had the faith of John Huss, who, though one of the greatest teachers of the country, was put in exile, was led into the dungeon and kept there for years; was finally led up to the stake where the fires were kindled, and when asked to renounce the Savior and his faith or burn there, he stood upon that pyre and sang songs of praise to his Master until the flames choked him, and only his lips could be seen moving in the bright flame, but they kept on moving until his soul went home to God who gave it. He passed through the fiery trials and enjoyed the blessing which God gave him. Now, says Peter, they will not all be like that John Huss; they will not all be like Savonarola, who walked out on the streets of Florence, willing to die for his Savior; they will not all be like those one hundred and eighty millions who died in the first three centuries of the Christian era for the Master’s sake. The righteous will scarcely be saved because they are not willing to endure the snubs that children of God sometimes receive; they are not willing to endure the trials that all must endure to walk in the footprints of the Master. If the world hated Jesus and nailed Him to the cross, how can you expect to be a true follower of the Lord Jesus Christ and have the world pat you on the back and say you are a good man? One great trouble with the Christian Church

today is that it is not willing to bear the frowns of an ungodly world. There are some people, well meaning people, who do not like to have the world to say one word against their pastor. I hope the day will never come when the world will like the pastor of the First Lutheran church. The day will never come when ungodly people will praise a man of God, because if they do they are not ungodly people any more. The Church must not be loved by the world, nor will the world be loved by the Church. There is a gulf between the world and the Church of God just as sure as there is a gulf between heaven and hell.

Another reason why the righteous will scarcely be saved, is because they fail to see the long, fiery trials of the lost. The righteous can see a little fire built up around the stake to burn them; they can see a little sneering around in the neighborhood; they can hear a little ungodly talk about them, that they can see and that they can feel, but they do not look beyond the grave and see what is coming for the ungodly. "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters." There are men who would not bear one thing for Christ's sake, who would willingly steal, or would willingly murder. There are people who would not do anything to aid the cause of Christ, but they are perfectly willing to meddle in other men's business. Now, says the Apostle Peter, the reason that the righteous man will scarcely be saved is because he will not attend strictly to his own business; because he will not look upon the short fiery trials of this world and see the awful fiery trials that are coming for the ungodly man, and the Christian, just because he looked at the present trials and did not see the trials to come for the ungodly, lost his faith and has plunged into the fire that never ceases to burn.

The present judgment gives the Christian a severe test, and unless he keeps His righteousness and remains faithful until death, he will never receive the crown of eternal life.

II. Mere Professors Are Not Saved

If this is true of the child of God, of the righteous, how much more must the second result be true? *The mere professors are not saved.* If the righteous will scarcely be saved, what shall become of the mere professors of religion, and how many there are in the world that merely profess to be

Christians, and that is all you can say. Who are they? They are the preachers who preach simply to make a living. They are the laymen who hear God's Word simply to make a living. I am not saying too much when I say that many a man would never preach the Gospel if he did not receive his salary. I am not saying too much when I say that the pulpit is a temptation to many a young man simply to go there and make speeches. How do I know this is true? I know many a minister of the Gospel the moment he loses his position in a church not only ceases to preach, but ceases to go to church. I can take you to the capital of a great state and lead you to one home after the other of ex-preachers who never see the inside of God's house. What did they mean when they were preaching? What did they mean when they stood behind the pulpit and behind the Word of God and proclaimed salvation to the people? They must have stood there because, like any other man, they expected to earn their bread by preaching and that was all there was in their call. What is that kind of a man but a mere professor – a man that would just as willingly do something else if he could draw the same salary; a man who has not got his heart in the ministry; a man who has not paid any attention to the Divine call; a man who is not aiming to win souls for heaven as much as he is to keep his pocketbook well filled. May God have mercy on the mere professor that stands in the pulpit and is not there wholly and solely for the purpose of saving souls!

That is not only true, I say, of the minister of the Gospel who preaches simply to get a living, but it is just as true of the man that sits in the pew, and sits there for that purpose. Why is it, my friends, that some men come to church only once a month; and why is it that they go just to such and such a church and to no other; and why is it that some men do not want to bring the truth into the church? Ask the question, and find the answer. It is this, either I want to gain in my business, or I do not want my business hurt. There have been men right here in this city who found fault with some of my sermons, because, said they, it is going to hurt our business. If the truth is to hurt your business, may God hurt your business and hurt it quickly. Whenever the business will be hurt by the truth, I say let the business be hurt. But that is only imaginary. Not many years ago a certain man had a tailor shop in this city; a band of men came and said, "If you do not obey our behests we will boycott you and drive you out." That man said, "I stand on the side of God and I am going to see if you will drive me out." That man is doing a bigger tailoring business in Mansfield today than any other

man here. They did not drive him out. There are not enough people in God's world to drive any one man and God out. You cannot do it. The thing for us to learn is this, that we must not hear the Gospel simply to get a living; we must not preach the Gospel simply to get a living; we must not join church simply to get more business. Our principle should be to find out the church that preaches God's truth, then to hear that truth, and live up to it, business or no business. On the great Judgment Day God is not going to ask how much business you did; He is going to ask if you were faithful; were you honest; how did you treat the poor; did you help the needy; did you lift up the fallen; did you have a love and a heart that was as big as the world? not, were you a narrow-minded man, looking out only for your own self? If the righteous scarcely is to be saved, what will become of the professed Christian who simply preaches to live, and simply hears to make his living in this world?

2. And Why Will Mere Professors Not Be Saved?

Because they are not regenerated; and because they do not want to be converted. How can a man be born again, from on high, and not live according to the new birth? How can a man be born from on high and not live a spiritual life? How can a man be regenerated and not live in the prayers and songs and in all the blessings of God's house? A mere professor is an unregenerated man and consequently cannot be saved in that condition.

Not only is it true that he is an unregenerated man, but it is also true that he does not want to be converted. Some people seem to think that conversion and regeneration are the same thing. It is not the same. Regeneration is the new life that comes from the Holy Spirit; it is that new life that is planted into the hearts of men, and can be planted into the heart of a babe a day old. A babe an hour old can be regenerated and it does not need to be converted. Regeneration is the new life that is planted in the old sinner, in his natural state, whether a day old or eighty years. When the new life in the heart of man begins to spring up, then comes the time when this man acts; if he goes wrong, he must turn back; and turning back to God is conversion. The man that is not regenerated does not care to be converted; he is perfectly satisfied in his natural state and goes on from day to day in his unconverted state, in his unregenerated state and consequently cannot be

saved. If the righteous scarcely can be saved, what shall become of the mere professor?

III. The Ungodly Have A Terrible Future Before Them

In the present judgment we find, in the third place, that *the ungodly have a terrible future before them.*

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?”

Oh, dear friends, if a righteous man can scarcely be saved, if a mere professor is not saved, then pray tell me what shall become of the ungodly man? And who are the ungodly?

The ungodly are those who do not want to know God, and do not want to be near God. Ungodly – away from God, not wanting to know anything about Him whatever. And are there not thousands of people all around us that have plenty of time to go anywhere to a dance, plenty of time to go anywhere on an excursion, plenty of time to spend, even after the midnight hour, but if you give them the privilege to study God’s word, to find out something about God, no time, no time. The ungodly man doesn’t want to know anything about God. He wants to keep just as ignorant as he possibly can concerning the true and living God. Pray tell me, how does this world ever get so many heathen? Is it God’s fault? When God created Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and told them who He was, – was it God’s fault that they forgot Him? When the people went on in wickedness and the whole world was destroyed in the days of Noah, and Noah and his three sons and their wives stepped out of that ark and built the altar and bowed down before it, and offered their songs of praises to the heavenly Father, then the whole world knew the true and living God. After the flood there were no heathen down in the heathen lands; there were no heathen then in Africa; there were no living heathen in the world. Why did they walk away from that altar and forget the true and living God? Why in our own times do we find that a Godly grandfather and grandmother have ungodly sons and daughters, and more ungodly grandchildren? Why are these things? The

answer is plain. People do not want to do right, and consequently they want to get away from God, who hath ears to hear and eyes to see, and are perfectly satisfied to make a god of stone that cannot hear and cannot speak, and has no heart, and has no conscience and no judgment, but the God that made the stone will bring about a judgment, my ungodly hearer.

Who are the ungodly? Not only do they want to know nothing about God, but they want to get away from Him just as far as they possibly can. Ungodly is not as strong a word as the Germans have; they say a man that is ungodly is "*Gott-los*" – loose from God; he is a man that wants to get away from God. A good child is perfectly willing to go down street with father and mother, but the ungodly boy would love to say. Father, let me tear loose; mother, let me go; I don't want to go where father goes; I don't want to go where mother goes; I want you to let me loose, mother. And down the street he runs. And just so there are ungodly people in the world. God has borne them on His shoulders; God has carried them on the palm of His hand; God has pressed them to His dear loving heart, but their cry is, O God, let me get loose; let me get away; I want to be ungodly. God says, I am the Lord Thy God; thou shalt have no other gods before Me; but the ungodly man does not care whether he professes Christ or not; he is willing to worship with ungodly skeptics, just so as to get away. God says, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; but the ungodly man curses and swears and tries to get away. God says. Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy; but the ungodly man on Sunday morning does not care whether he keeps it holy or not, he wants to get loose from God. God says. Honor thy father and thy mother that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth; but the ungodly girl does not care how she treats her mother; the ungodly boy does not care how he treats his father; they want to get loose from God. God says. Thou shalt not kill, and Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, but the ungodly man says, I will not rear a big family, if I have got to murder; the ungodly mother says, I will not rear a big family, if I have got to kill. The ungodly persons say, I will say all manner of bad things about this one and that one; I hate them; I cannot bear them – they want to get away. God says. Thou shalt not steal; but the ungodly man says, I can make a thousand dollars by telling a lie, and I will tell it, and get away from God. God tells us we shall not lie nor deceive our neighbor, but the ungodly man says, I will do it. God says, Thou shalt not covet, but this man says, I will covet, I want to get loose from God. Oh, my

friends, the great trouble with all of us is we are trying to get away from God, trying to get loose from God, and just as far as we get away from God, in so far we are ungodly.

I said a moment ago the present judgment will decide that the ungodly have a terrible future before them. Why will they have such a terrible future? Because God cannot always keep them; secondly, because there will be no place but hell left for them. “Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”

I bring that question to every ungodly person in this house tonight, where are you going to appear? God cannot always keep you. This is God’s earth, but you cannot always stay here. I hear one of you saying, I am going to stay at my home after this; I will never come back to this church again. Well, suppose you try that; suppose you stay at home, and some of these days a fever will take you in that home and keep you down on your bed; you call a physician; your temperature is up to 104; it rises to 105, and soon it is announced that your heart is just about to stop beating, and it will stop beating. Are you going to stay in that home then? Where are you going to appear? Well, you say, I suppose I will stay there even though I am dead. Yes, you will stay there a little while longer; your neighbors will bring you a few flowers – they never brought you any while you lived, but they will bring you a few when dead, and lay them on your coffin; word will be sent to the preacher – if he had come while you were living you would have ordered him out of the house – but you will have to have him when you are dead; it wouldn’t do not to have the preacher; and then you will be carried out; six men will take you out of the door, you cannot stay; you are dead. Then where will you appear? Well, I suppose then I will be riding in the hearse for the first time. Yes, and it will not take you very long to finish that ride. Then where will you appear? Then we will set you down beside that cold grave, and arrange the straps and let you down slowly into that cold ground. And then where will you appear? In the grave? Well, if you could stay there forever I would never preach another sermon. But I am informed by Him who made the heavens and the earth that He is not going to let you stay there; I am informed by Him who takes a grain of wheat, and makes you a loaf of bread from it; I am informed by Him who took Elijah up to heaven in a chariot of fire, that He is coming to raise the quick and the dead, and to judge them; and where are you going to appear when God runs His fingers under that grave, and lifts up, and brings you out before the

judgment? I suppose then you will say, I will appear before my God, I suppose, I cannot help it. No, you cannot help it; nor can those help it who are in the sea, for the sea shall give up its dead. Then where will you appear? I suppose I shall stand before my God on the Judgment Day. But every day, my friend, has got a sunset; every day has got an end; the Judgment Day will also have an end; then where shall you appear? Where? In heaven? You cannot stand it even in church while on earth, how will you stand it in heaven? It would be a regular hell for you; but you will never be there; your own father, if he were there, would not want you there; he would not want to make hell out of heaven; the angels wouldn't allow you there; God himself would not allow you there. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God, nor enter the kingdom of heaven. Then where will you appear. Oh, ungodly man? You have a terrible future before you. Stay here on earth? The earth itself shall be burned up. Where will you appear? At the Judgment? The judgment shall end. Where will you appear? In heaven? Only the righteous shall dwell there. Where shall you appear; oh, where shall you appear?

There will be no place left but hell for those that are ungodly and will not repent. When God puts the question, Where shall they appear? it means something. Next Friday evening it is my purpose to start a new class to show people the way to heaven. Oh, ungodly man, if you are sitting before me tonight, how can you allow yourself not to take advice when you can get it? How can you allow yourself to go to destruction, when there are thousands of prayers ascending to heaven on your behalf? How can you refuse to take the warning that comes from one who stands before you as a dying man speaking to dying men? How can you live on another year and not be sure that you are saved. If the righteous will scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Oh, may the Holy Spirit help every one in this house tonight to take the advice of Himself given in the last verse of my text: "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." God gave you to the world. God is almighty and His heart is love itself and His life is light; His home is heaven and His glory is great, and all things are promised to you. How, can you escape if you neglect so great a salvation offered to you in Jesus Christ? May these words tonight move all of you to repent of your sins, to believe on Christ, to accept Him

and to be faithful until death that you may receive the crown of eternal life.
Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast permitted us to spend this whole day in communion with Thee, and in proclaiming Thy most holy truth, and as we are now about to continue the communion which we have had before this altar this morning, we ask Thee to prepare us especially for the worthy celebration of Thy Holy Supper. We pray Thee, O God, that Thou wilt bless the message of the evening. Help that it may be such a message that everyone hearing it will accept Thee and walk in Thy ways. We pray Thee, heavenly Father, that Thou wilt move us all to pray to Thee more earnestly in the future than we have in the past. Help us to live lives that are consistent with our profession. Help us not to be hypocritical in anything we say or do. We ask Thee for Thy Spirit from on high to enlighten us, so that we may always walk in the footprints of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.
Amen.

9. Three Hearts. *Epiphany.*

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they that gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord. Isaiah 60:1-6.

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

ABOUT ONE YEAR AGO TONIGHT a well informed Christian on many topics came to me and said, What does Epiphany mean, anyway? It is not a new word, dear friends; it is a word that has been used in the Christian Church from the days of Christ until now. Not very long after the day of Pentecost the Church of God felt a great interest in keeping those great days in God's history. It has generally been acknowledged by the fathers that Jesus Christ was baptized on the 6th day of January, and when the Holy Spirit sat upon the Savior on that day, and He began to appear publicly from that day on, Epiphany was a popular word in the Christian Church, and from that day to this it represents, in some localities, the day of the baptism of Jesus Christ. The western churches celebrated the 25th day of December as Christmas long before the eastern churches did. Shortly after the fourth century the eastern churches adopted the same Christmas day, and from that time on Epiphany had a three-fold meaning; In the first place they retained the old meaning, the festival of the baptism of Jesus Christ; in the second place they added to it the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ at Cana of Galilee, performing His miracles; in other words, the appearing of the great wonders of Christ; then, furthermore, they added to that the coming of the wise men from the east, those three kings, as a call of the great truth of Christ to a dying, perishing world. These three ideas prevailed in the Christian Church

until the days of the Reformation. In the sixteenth century then the great Church of God began to see all these three ideas in one; All the world for Christ; World wide missions! The heart of God reaching out to save every immortal soul. Epiphany, then, means heart – heart of God; heart of the world, and heart of Christians. I call your attention this morning then to the theme

Three Hearts

May the Holy Spirit help us this morning to have in our hearts that love to work out, as far as man's work is concerned, the great work that God has given us to do. I call attention,

I. To The Heart Of The World

“For behold the darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people.”

The first thing that God said when He created the world was, Let there be light, and there was light. On the last day of creation He also gave a light, which is burning and flickering today yet down deep in the hearts of even heathen, and that is the image of God in man, the consciousness that there is a law that says what is right and what is wrong. My Christian friends, when sin came into the world, the light of the image of God was put out; only here and there can you find a little flicker of the flame down deep in the hearts of heathen nations. You will find that by the side of every man of God in history there is a heathen drawn toward God. By the side of Abraham of old, who preserved the truth, we find a Melchizedek; by the side of Elisha, a Naaman coming over from Egypt; by the side of Solomon we find a Queen of Sheba; and in the days of the apostles we find Cornelius looking for the great truth; we find in the days of Jesus Christ a Syrophenician woman coming with faith and prayer such as was never beheld on earth before; and so I say there is a natural drawing all through history of a world that is cast into darkness, and in this darkness we find the heart of the world.

You will find the heart dark with original sin. When Adam and Eve sinned it was said of Seth, born to them, that he was born in the likeness of

his father. How can a man that is a sinner have a child born in his likeness and not be a sinful child? Therefore, from the first pages of the Word of God until the last you will find this great truth passing over every page, that man is by nature a child of wrath; that we are by nature in the dark; that our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; that we cannot see spiritually, we are blind; we are deaf; we are dumb; we are in the dark. The poor little child therefore, born into a sinful world cannot help having a darkened heart.

And this heart, born in the darkness of sin, instead of growing lighter by itself, grows darker and darker by actual sin. Look around the world today and see how dark it is; see how many people there are that do not know at all who God is; see how many people there are that when they know, or do not know, take the most holy name of God in vain; see how many people there are that know nothing at all about the Lord's Day; they live as if there never had been a God in heaven; they live as if there had never been a law. Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. See how many people there are that have no love whatever for their aged fathers and mothers and can hardly wait until the day they are laid down to rest in the earth with the words: "Ashes to ashes and dust to dust." It is only too sad that these things are true. Oh, the darkness of the heart of the world. Then, furthermore, look at the murdering that is going on; think of the 80,000 to 100,000 men slaughtered recently at Port Arthur. There you not only find the stream of blood flowing, but you find it in Armenia; you find it in Africa; you find it not only in the nations where war is carried on by nations, but you find the blood is flowing in every city and every state; all over the world the sword is drawn. And there are not nearly so many actual murderers as there are murderers in God's sight. Many a man has failed to drive the dagger into the heart of his enemies; they are not living because they were not hated, or because they are not spiritually murdered, but simply the Providence of God has held some hand back, not permitting it to accomplish what it wanted to do. When we stop to think how our daily papers are filled with murders, it makes one think it is about time that the printing presses print every message with blood. Wherever we look the world is dark, sinning against God, and sinning against our fellow men.

This darkened heart of the world becomes darker yet when we stop to realize the lost souls that are in this world. Oh, how many there are that are still outside of the kingdom of God. There are in the world at the present time at least seven millions of Jews – seven millions of people who had the

promise of a Savior – seven millions of people whose fathers looked forward to the day when this Light announced in our text should come, and the glory of the Lord should shine upon them – seven millions of people who rejected the Savior when He did come, and cried out before His cross. Let His blood be upon us and upon our children! And the blood of that Christ is upon their children. Seven millions of them today all over this world, looking for a Savior and finding none, too proud to acknowledge their mistake. And where are they? Going down to death at the rate of a man every moment. Oh, the darkened heart of this world!

Then there are in this world at least one hundred and eighty-five million Mohammedans – 185,000,000 of people who have a mixture of the religion of Abraham, and false religions. There are some things among the Mohammedans that have been brought out of the Bible; there are many things among the Mohammedans that have been brought from heathen nations; but one thing we must not forget about all Mohammedans, and that is that they teach vengeance, and envy, and murder; their whole aim is to drive people at the edge of the sword to accomplish whatever is their will; that a man born in 611 has brought a curse upon the world that cannot be erased as long as the sun shines; 185,000,000 people today worshiping a false God, worshiping in false religion, carrying murder in their hearts, teaching sinful lust to be even found in heaven. Oh, the poor dark heart of the world!

And then think of those that have never yet heard of Christ. I hear people saying every day, I am opposed to foreign missions; we have enough to do here at home. Oh, what a narrow, narrow saying that is, and what a lack of love, and what darkness in the hearts of professed Christians, that talk that way. I know, as I shall show you hereafter, that we have heathen enough all around us, but, dear friends, it is a different thing to have heathen in Mansfield, and to have heathen out in some lonely island where there never was seen a Bible, where there never was heard a sermon, where there never has been a soul baptized, where the true and living God is entirely unknown; where the people could not find the truth if they wanted it. Brethren, there are eight hundred and thirty millions of people on God's earth today yet that are living in this total darkness, that if they were to die tonight they have no one to look to, to be saved. Oh, the dark heart of the world!

And not only is this true of heathen, it is just as true of professed Christians. We say there are four hundred and fifty millions of Christians in the world, and when you go to the encyclopedia to find out where they are found, every man in the United States is called a Christian. You know and I know that there are at least one half of the people in Mansfield that do not go to the house of God. You know and I know that there are about half of our people that make no profession of Christianity; and you know, and I know, that there are more people in Mansfield going to church, according to the population than in most cities. The truth of it is that among these 450,000,000 there are to say the least 225,000,000 who are not Christians at all. Now add these 225,000,000 so called Christians to the 830,000,000 of outright heathen, the 185,000,000 of Mohammedans and the 7,000,000 Jews, who openly reject Christ, and compare, if you please, for a moment, the true Christians with the millions and millions who are living in total darkness – is it any wonder that we find that the heart of the world is dark? “For behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people.”

II. The Great Heart of God

Epiphany shows us not only the heart of the darkened world, but also the great heart of God.

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall rise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they that gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.”

Here, my friends, in these words we find the great heart of God; we find a light in God’s heart in His prophecies, and in the New Testament times, but the greatness of this light shall be seen in the hereafter – in eternity.

Yes, God’s heart is full of light. The first thing He said on the morning of creation was, Let there be light; and when the sun went down, when the first sin was committed the first promise was that the seed of the woman

should crush the serpent's head; and that first promise of the Savior was again a light in a darkened world. As time passed on, the people were taught clearer and clearer of the coming of a Savior. It was not long until this same prophet sang to the world, Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Emmanuel. This same prophet brought out a great truth when he said of this little child that He should be born of the virgin, that His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Daylight was to come when Christ was born, but remember, Isaiah lived just about seven hundred years before Christ was born. Now, if he could stand up and cry out seven hundred years before daylight, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee," Oh, what a heart there must be in God, filled with that light that could be seen seven hundred years before the morning! True there was no real morning in history until the wise men came from the east and saw the Christ at Bethlehem; nevertheless, the heart of God was so full of light, that four thousand years before that time it was already shining, and seven hundred years before that time the prophet Isaiah could not help but say. Daylight is coming! Arise, shine, for thy light is come!

All through the prophecies of the Old Testament you will find the burning light of God's promises; the burning light of God's heart; that there is a light that is just burning itself out in the darkness and telling the world to wait patiently, that the light of God is coming.

It is not very far from this time until we find that he shall ride into Jerusalem as a great king, welcomed by Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Daniel saw this child and said He shall be born in so many weeks of prophesy. We are told by others that He should be born in Bethlehem. And so we find one light after the other, even shining down into the grave, and telling us that God will not suffer His Holy One to see corruption; that He shall rise before that body can decay.

2. The Heart of God Shines

And so the heart of God shines on until we come to the New Testament times, and then it shines brighter than ever. The very stars of heaven had to tell us that the Christ is born. The very angels of God had to come with their

brightened wings, flying over the plains of the shepherds singing, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” The Savior is coming! The messenger from heaven brought the news: “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy; for this day is born to you in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.” The heart of God is shining forth in history!

Time passes on and this little child becomes a man; and this man steps down to the river Jordan and is baptized; as He kneels down after the baptism there comes a light from heaven, the Holy spirit – the same Holy Spirit that dwelt upon the face of the waters on the morning of creation – and rested upon Him, to tell John the Baptist, and through him, the world, that this is the heart of God! This is the Light of the World! And no wonder John speaks of that Light, and of that life, and of that love, of the great Savior.

This light in the heart of God becomes clearer and clearer. The Lord Jesus Christ, it is true, when He is dying on Calvary, makes the sun go down at noon, but the very fact that the sun must refuse to shine when Jesus Christ was dying, is an evidence of the fact that the heart of God is after all a great light. How could the sun shine in the heavens when the heart was dying? How could the sun shine in the heavens when the light in the breast of God was going out? How could it be otherwise, but that the sun in heaven would have to be dark when the Light of the world goes down and out on Calvary’s hill? But, my friends, while the light went out, the heart was still there, and on the third morning, when that angel came and rolled the rock away, that light burned anew.

And when on that day He walked out to Emmaus, there was a light that burned so much that the two men that were walking with Him said afterwards: Did not our hearts burn within us when He was explaining the Scriptures along the way? How could it be otherwise?

A man could not get his breast close to the breast of God without feeling the light of the heart of God; and that is why John, who laid his head upon the breast of the Savior so much, was filled with such a message of love, with such a message of life, with such a message of light. He got his life, his light and his love from the heart of Jesus Christ.

On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came and settled down upon the people like fiery tongues. These were only sparks out of the heart of Jesus

Christ who had ascended on high, for the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and from the Son.

Time passes on; the Savior has ascended on high; the promise is given, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." The middle ages come, the middle ages, including the dark ages; it almost seemed at times that the light of God which had grown dimmer and dimmer, never would be seen. Sometimes you find the hottest fires unseen. When Mount Vesuvius destroyed the city of Pompeii, it was not a new fire; it was an old fire that burst forth. When, in the days of the Reformation, Dr. Luther took his ninety-five theses and nailed them to the door of Wittenberg castle, it was not a new fire that broke forth in Europe; it was the same old fire that was burning down in Florence in the days of Savonarola; it was the same old fire that was burning in the days of that grand old martyr, John Huss; it was the same old fire that burned those one hundred eighty-five million of people in the first three centuries of the Christian era. Even the persecutions of Christians are only sparks of what children of God will endure for the fire that is burning in the heart of God.

Time passes on, and in this century, more than in any century since the days of Christ, we are living in the missionary period. We are living in the time when is being fulfilled what the prophet Isaiah said long, long ago: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Now we are living in the time when is being fulfilled what he said: "Then thou shalt see and flow together, and thine heart shall fear and be enlarged, because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee; the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." The time has come in the Christian Church when we must reach out further and further, carrying out the light of the Gospel until the ends of the earth shall hear that Jesus is the only Savior.

And this light is going on to the Judgment Day, and on that last great day, when the dead shall come forth from the sea and from the earth, when the quick and the dead shall all stand before God, then they shall see this light as it never has been seen before; then they shall know what it means when John said, "He is the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." But I apprehend, my dear friends, that even the Judgment Day will not show us Christ in all His greatest greatness yet. I believe when those who have died in Christ and have risen in His name, and are pronounced blessed, shall enter into the kingdom of the Father; when those

have entered the gate of heaven and have gone on with Him from place to place throughout the corridors of that great throne of His, they shall find out glory such as they never saw even on the Judgment Day; that the glory of the eternal God cannot be seen in one day, even though it is the Judgment Day. Oh, great heart of God, how full of light!

III. The Great Heart of God Produces the Heart of the Christian

And that great heart of God shining in this world, where the heart is so dark, also produces the heart of the Christian. Let us notice the heart of the Christian, that it not only is filled with God's light, and enlarged thereby, but it also shines with God's light.

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light.”

We find then that in this text the Christian, or the Christian people, are supposed to possess the light of God. Jesus Christ not only said, “I am the Light of the world,” but He said to His disciples, “Ye are the light of the world.” It is impossible for a man to be in this world, with the Gospel all around him, without receiving some light from the great heart of God, and this great light of God, when it does come to our hearts, does not simply throw light into one side or the other, but fills that heart. The Christian, therefore, should be filled with the light of God, and when He is filled with the light of God, then that light is his; he can call it his own, and when he can call the light his own, he can call God his own; then he can look up and say, “Our Father, who art in heaven.” Let us not be satisfied with simply a little light; let us have our souls filled with the message of God. This Word should be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. If the Word of God is the lamp that shines forth from the very heart of God, let us take that lamp and put it in our hearts and fill our hearts with light. Did you ever stop to think that you cannot fill a room only half way with light? Though I only strike a match in this dark church at twelve o'clock at night, that little spark

fills the church with light; and if the light of God's eternal Gospel shines into our souls, the heart of God makes our hearts filled with the light.

2. Our Hearts Grow Larger and Larger

And when our hearts are filled with light they must begin to expand, and grow larger and larger. "Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged." There is nothing more harmful than a physically enlarged heart, and there is nothing more harmful to the Christian than a spiritually small heart, and it seems to me that so many of us are troubled with the small heart in Christianity. We cannot see a mile away from our own church door; we cannot see at all what is needed beyond the waters. Last year in our own church when we came to raise money in the Sunday school for foreign missions, we lacked a little of nine thousand dollars; when we came to raise money for home missions and church extension, eighteen thousand dollars; in other words, we had the little heart. We had the little heart to give eighteen thousand dollars for taking care of Christians around home that could go to the churches that are established, but we had only nine thousand dollars for the many, many millions of people that never heard of Jesus Christ. I maintain that when Christians have their hearts filled with God's light, and enlarged with God's light, they should be just as much interested in the poor Japanese beyond the sea, the poor heathen down in Africa as in those heathen right around their own doors. Does the sun that shines in heaven throw its light only on one spot on the earth? Does it try to throw its light only on one globe? No. The sun, just because it is a light, throws its light on the moon, and on the earth, and every part of it that is turned toward it. A cloud cannot get between us and the sun without being made brilliant on the other side with the same sun that gives light to us. Let us pray for enlarged hearts; let us pray for the missionary spirit that shall make us reach out in every way, and enlarge with our gifts, enlarge with our prayers and with our praises for the salvation of the world. It does not seem to me that we have grasped the true spirit of missions in this twentieth century. God said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Sometimes I feel that I ought to take that one text and preach on it fifty-two times in one year, until we understand that when God says. Go, He means

go; when He says preach. He means preach; when He says Gospel, He means Gospel; when He says world. He means world; when He says all nations, He means all nations; when He says, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He means they shall be saved; and when He says he that believeth not shall be damned. He means they shall be damned. That is what God means, but it does seem to me, dear friends, that we think that God is fooling when He says these words; it does look as if we thought our tobacco was worth more than the salvation of the world. Many a man is willing to spend \$20 a year for the filth that goes into his mouth, but is not willing to spend twenty cents for home missions, unless he can get a half a dollar supper. Oh, shame for Christianity in the present day. What am I doing? What are you doing? I am spending more for my girls' hats than I am for the salvation of souls. We ought to get down on our knees for shame for the way we are having our hearts narrowed down, so narrow, so narrow, that providing we can get a ten-cent supper, we will give ten cents for missions. It is a wonder that God is saving the world as long as He is. It is a wonder that we Christians are not robbed of our churches and of the presence of God; that we do not go back to heathendom as Africa did. I do not believe, not excluding myself at all, there is one preacher in America today that is a true missionary. I do not believe there is one professed Christian in ten thousand that is trying to carry out exactly what God means. Let us not sit around this morning and point to our neighbor and say, he doesn't do anything. None of us are doing anything. When our year book comes out again it will be a disgrace before God and heaven, what we are doing for foreign missions. And what I say of this church I am saying of every church on God's earth. We are willing to spend dollars for excursions, hundreds of dollars for pride, and to hold on to the filthy dirt we have got, and hold on until we die, then it is all gone and our children fight over it, but nothing for missions. I believe if I could get the right kind of missionary spirit myself that you would soon have it. I believe the trouble is with us preachers. I believe we are in the ministry just like a great many people are in business, to make a little money, to get along, just keep on until we die. Oh, for a spirit of John the Baptist! Oh, for the spirit of an Elijah! My God, give me the missionary spirit, and by Thy help I will give it to Thy people. "Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged." Oh God, enlarge Thy servant's heart; enlarge Thy servants'

hearts, and may Thy servants' hearts enlarged be the means of enlarging the heart of Thy Church. Amen.

3. Our Hearts Should Shine

We not only find, dear friends, that this heart of the Christian should be enlarged, but we find furthermore that this same heart should shine.

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.”

Our Christian hearts ought to shine upward, outward, and reflexively.

First of all, we must let our hearts shine upward. “Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.” We ought to give God the glory. There is the trouble; we are trying to get a little glory for ourselves. Every man who does anything is willing to talk about what he is doing; every woman who does anything wants the glory for herself, and just in that way we are robbing God of His glory, taking the missionary spirit out of the churches and robbing immortal souls of salvation. Oh, that we could all sing, every service, All glory be to God on high, and keep on singing it until we will consider it an offense to give us praise for anything. what praise do I deserve? Nothing. What praise do you deserve? Nothing. Why is it we are constantly worrying about this and that? Because we have the wrong idea, that some man ought to have the praise for it. None of us deserves praise. When we have done our very best, we have only done partly our duty, and when we have done our duty, we should look up and thank God we are able to do our duty. If I have any strength at all to stand here, who gave it to me but God? And if I have any wisdom at all, who gave it to me but God? If I have any gift at all, how could I ever have it but by God's grace and mercy? If you have any gift, who deserves the glory but God alone? We should stop thinking some man is going to get the glory, and all join hand to hand and heart to heart, and let our hearts shine upward and give all glory to our Master. We should not be talking about which one has the best Sunday School class, or which one is doing this or that better than the other; we should simply say, All glory be to God on high, and then our hearts would begin to shine upward.

And after shining upward, our hearts will begin to shine outward. We find this shining outward goes in any way – any direction; it consists of

gifts – gifts of money; gifts of prayer and praise. “The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord.” If a man is a Christian, as I say, he is going to shine out; he is going to take his means that God gave him and hand it over for the special purpose of sending missionaries out to the world; he is going to use his tongue to praise God; he is going to shine out. As long as a man does not care whether he worships God or not, he can keep his tongue quiet; but when he is once filled with God’s eternal light he cannot keep quiet in congregational singing. I knew a woman who could not sing Old Hundred if you gave her a hundred dollars, yet you could not have hired her for a thousand dollars to keep quiet when the congregation began to sing. She sang because filled with love to God, filled with God’s light, she let it shine out. We are told they shall even come from Midian and Ephah and from Sheba, and shall all praise the Lord. Are you surprised when I urge upon you to buy a hymnbook. If you were going to war I would want you to take a sword; I would want you to go prepared. What would any one think of an army leaving its weapons at home? That is about the way most people go to church; they sit down without a hymnbook; they sit down without a Bible and without prayer. Let your light shine out. Two thousand voices all praising God will bring everybody to Christ who comes to hear. Then see that we do not sit down and refuse to make use of the weapons God gave us. Shine with gifts. Shine with our lives.

There is nothing that has such an influence in a community as a good Christian life. A man came from the east not long ago and stopped at one of our cities in this state, and asked a friend, What kind of people are out west? Why, he replied, what kind of people are east? All bad. Well, he said, that is just the kind we have west; they are all bad. The same day another man stopped at the same house, going west, and asked what kind of people he would find out there. What kind of neighbors did you leave in the east? was the reply. They are all good there. You will find them all good out west, too. A bad man will find bad neighbors wherever he goes; a good man will make good neighbors wherever he goes. You understand what I mean. Let your light shine out. Go into a community and live as God wants you to live, and you are preaching every day with your silence, and with your life, a sermon that will go down deep into the heart of every neighbor.

Then we ought to shine reflexively. We are told, “And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.” We are told again of these people, “they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord.” – indicating the reflex action of the light. If you give missionaries to the world, if you give gifts and light to the world, that light must come back again. This is true wherever you look. It is true in nature. When the leaves fall down from the tree, the tree does not lose anything; the leaves protect the roots during the winter, and the next spring will send forth buds again more beautiful than ever. The ocean loses nothing when it gives its waters to the rays of the sun; when it is lifted up in a cloud and carried over the mountains, covers them with snow; the next summer’s heat melts the snow and brings the water down the mountains and back to the ocean again. No difference what you do, when you throw a light out it is going to come back again. Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days. And so you will find missionary work always does pay. Our forefathers were all heathen. Did you ever think of that? We did not come from Israel; we came from men and women who used to cut each other’s heads off with stone knives in Europe, and if missionaries had not been sent to them, we would all have been cannibals today. See what we are doing now that the Gospel came to us. We are called to bring the Gospel back to where it started. The light must come back again, and you will find that the more you do for God’s kingdom, the more it will do for you. It is a great blessing for you to get interested in the world’s salvation, because then you will find you will be interested in your own. The church that does not interest itself in the salvation of souls beyond the seas, is not much interested in the salvation of souls at home. Just as soon as I become intensely interested in the salvation of the people living on the other side of the globe, just so soon will I become interested in the salvation of father and mother, of son and daughter; but whenever we are willing to allow a man to be damned on the other side of the world, we are willing that father and mother shall be damned and that the children shall be damned. The missionary spirit cannot be confined to a little heart; it either must go out to the world, or it dies. May God our heavenly Father, give us this light until it shall shine forth by gifts, and prayers, and songs of praise, until we shall be intensely interested in the welfare of every Christian missionary on God’s earth, and then by reflex action may the light come back to us, until we be more and more interested in our own salvation, in the salvation of our

children, in the salvation of our friends, yes, and in the salvation of our enemies. Arise, shine forth, dear Christian friends, the balance of your days. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we pray Thee this evening that Thou wilt give to Thy servants all over the world a real consciousness of what they are here for, and of what it means for them to stand as dying men before a perishing world. O Father in heaven, Thou who seest the poor heathen who are still living in ignorance all around this world, and seest the inactivity of Thy Church, do Thou send the messenger of God, who himself shall enlighten and shall be the means of sending others, until hand in hand and heart to heart, we shall carry out the great heart of God in its blessing to the darkened heart of the world. Hear this our prayer for Jesus sake, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

10. Thinking Sunday School Teachers. *First Sunday After Epiphany.*

I Beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be ye not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Rom. 12:1-5.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved Teachers and Officers of the First Lutheran Sunday School, and Christian Hearers:

I REJOICE TO HAVE such a corps of teachers as we have in this church, and to have such officers, who are willing to give their bodies as a sacrifice to carry on the work that is to be done in this city by this congregation. I would, therefore, have you, in the very beginning, not to think too much of yourselves. I should say, in the language of Paul, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. We read in our latest missionary reports of Christian schools that are being held in heathen lands, and how many thousands of children are being brought out of the darkness of heathendom into the glorious light of the kingdom of God by Christian schools every day, and when I hear of those Christian schools in heathen lands, I sometimes feel that I would like to move my family into those

Christian spots in heathen lands, where I could have a Sunday school every day. If a parochial school which educates the children every day in matters pertaining to the soul is such a wonderful blessing, surely we cannot overestimate the value of a Sunday school which, though it only occupies a short time, reaches a great many people that otherwise could not be reached. I know of some churches that have parochial schools in which children are educated from Monday morning until Friday evening in the Word of God, and then you find no Sunday school in those churches. That is a mistake. If I had a parochial school in this church that would educate all the children five or six days in a week, I should still insist upon a Sunday school, for a Sunday school is not only, for children that can go every day to a parochial or public school, but the Sunday school should be for the pastor, and for the older people as well as for the young, as one large school, to study the Word of God. The Apostle Paul, of all the apostles, was the deepest thinker. Peter tells us himself that he was so deep that at times he was hard to understand; but this great logician and theologian was not only a thinker himself, but he wanted others to think; he wanted these Romans, gifted men, to use their minds to think of the deep things that are found in God's Word. The more I study God's Word, and the more I compare it with the education of people of later days, the more I am convinced that we need thinking teachers; we need the very best men and women that can be found in the Church of God to educate the rest in this glorious truth that lies before us tonight. I will, therefore, ask you to meditate a few moments with me, as teachers, officers and hearers, on the theme,

Thinking Sunday School Teachers

- I. They must think deeply of God.
- II. They must think of the world and the church.
- III. They must work harmoniously together.

I. They Must Think Deeply of God

Thinking Sunday school teachers must think deeply of God – of His *will*, of His *sacrifice* and of His *mercies*.

1. The Will of God

“Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.”

The first duty we have as teachers is to know the will of our heavenly Father, and it is not hard to find out, in general, what that will is. This Book is called the Old and the New Testament. Testament itself means will. The Old Testament means the will of God given before Christ was born, and the New Testament means the will of God given in the later days after Christ was born. When we read through the Bible carefully, we find out that in this Book God has told us the will of the Father, the will of the Son, and the will of the Holy Ghost. We find in general it is the will of God that all men should be saved. We find in this Old Testament the words: “As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked should turn from his evil way and live.” We find in the New Testament these words, contained in the will: “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” We find in the Old Testament the will of God expressed in the Divine law, that we should love God with all our heart, with all our soul, and mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. We find in the New Testament that this law is the schoolmaster that is to bring us to Christ. We find in this Book the words: “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me.” We find in this Book these words: “Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it.” We find in this Word another message, and that is: “And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” One of the very first duties, therefore, of you as teachers is to study the Word of God that you may know the will of the Father, who surely wanted the world saved, or He would not have given His only Son to die for us. You must study this Word that you may know the will of Jesus Christ, who surely wanted the world saved or He would not have laid down His life on Calvary, and cried out: “Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.” Study this Word that you may know the will of the Holy Spirit, who surely wanted everybody saved, or He would not call, and call, and call, and gather, and gather, and

gather, and enlighten and sanctify and keep His people. The call is going out today all over the world: Come to your Savior. Turn to the true and living God. Escape for your life!

Knowing, then, that this is the will of God, it becomes our duty to search the Bible diligently; not only to search it at home, but to make use of every help that we can get. It is well understood in public schools that the teacher who does not attend the conventions, who does not attend the teachers' meetings shall be barred from teaching, and it is perfectly correct that that should be done. If we want to be teachers at all, we should try to be just as efficient and sufficient as we possibly can. One of the very first principles, therefore, of a good Sunday school should be that every teacher, if he possibly can, should make it his duty and his privilege to attend the teachers' meetings, for a twofold purpose: one is to get knowledge that he has not got, and the other is to give knowledge to others that they have not got. While I say this, I say it with all love and all patience. Let us not forget, dear friends, that long life on certain lines makes us live on those lines, and it is hard to get out of them. Let us not forget that only a few months back we had a very small teachers' meeting of our own; some of you who are the most enthusiastic today were not attending the teachers' meetings at all a year ago. There may be others who cannot see their way clear to attend even now. Let us have very much patience with them and not criticize them harshly. Pray God to help us all to see that there is more wisdom in many than in few; help us to see that we should be helpers among each other; that we should work together to find out the glorious will of God.

Notice what kind of a will it is: It is a good will, an acceptable will, and a perfect will. The question is not so much what does the pastor want, or what does the superintendent want, or what do the officers want, but what does God want? God's will is good; God's will is not only good, but it is acceptable; not only acceptable, but perfect, and the more we can all come together and sit down at the feet of the great Teacher, Jesus Christ, and listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, the more we will be equipped to be thinking teachers. Do not forget what was said by the wisest man ever born of woman, aside from Jesus Christ Himself. He said, The fear of God is the beginning of all wisdom. The very beginning of all wisdom; and if the fear of God is the beginning of all wisdom, how can a man be wise when he has not got the fear of God in his heart; and if he does not know the will of God,

how can he have the fear of God in his heart? Let us, therefore, think very much of the will of God.

2. God's Great Sacrifice

Then, as teachers we should not only think of the will of God, but of the great sacrifice that He made.

“I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice.”

Why does this great apostle lay such great stress upon this living sacrifice? Because he has in mind another sacrifice that was made, namely, the sacrifice of God, and that was the sacrifice of death. Oh, we cannot dwell too much upon the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary; that is the one story, the sweet old story that the teacher must not only teach, but hear, every week and every day; we must not only hear it, but think and meditate upon it very much. I confess as I stand before you tonight, that about every good thought I have ever had, and about everything that has gone to make half a man of me, has been received very close to the cross of Christ.

There have been times when I felt in my own carnal way like taking revenge on some people, and then I would walk up to that cross and think a little while; I would hear my Savior saying there, as the blood was running down His hands and His feet and His breast, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”; and the longer I stayed there, the more I was compelled to say, Oh, fool, why not let this revenge be washed out of thy heart with the prayer of Christ, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. I have often thought. Oh, that I might be in a world where God's laws were not so strict; that I might be in a world where I might obey that voice of the flesh which says, Come on, eat, drink and be merry, have a joyful time; then I have walked up to the cross of Calvary, and as I stood there and looked at that crown of thorns upon my Savior's head, and at the wounds of Him hanging there in death, standing in the presence of God alone, I have said to myself, If those feet are bleeding and dying for me, must I permit my feet to walk on forbidden paths? If that One is dying there for me, atoning for a sinful world, must I go out and enjoy myself, treading upon the very thorns that are now pressing upon His bleeding brow? And

the more I stood there, the more I felt that the victory would be given to the spirit, and that the flesh must be conquered. Standing before the cross of Calvary, let us not forget to sing every day of the blood of Calvary. Let us not forget to sing:

"Alas, and did my Savior bleed,
And did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

Was it for crimes that I had done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!

Well might the sun in darkness hide.
And shut his glories in,
When Christ, the mighty Maker, died
For man the creature's sin!

Thus might I hide my blushing face,
While His dear cross appears;
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,
And melt my eyes to tears.

But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe;
Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do."

I would have you go to the cross every day, and as you look into the face of Jesus, say, and pray:

"O bleeding Head, and wounded,
And full of pain and scorn;
In mockery surrounded
With cruel crown of thorn.
O Head, before adorned
With grace and majesty.
Insulted now, and scorned –
All Hail! I bid to Thee."

I would have you stand before that cross and say:

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side that flowed,
Be of sin the double cure.
Save me. Lord, and make me pure.”

And think, and think, and think, of the great sacrifice of God, until that message of John, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world! shall drive you to your Sunday school class to teach your children the wonderful love of God. That was a dead sacrifice, and that being a dead sacrifice, the great apostle says, Now give Him a living sacrifice.

3. His Mercies

I would have you to think deeply of His mercies.

“I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service.”

Oh, the mercies of God! Oh, the mercy of God that permitted us to be born in a civilized land! Oh, the mercy of God that permitted most of us to be born of Christian mothers and begotten of Christian fathers! Oh, the mercy of God that took some of us, even in our infancy, and brought us to the altar of God in Holy Baptism! Oh, the mercy of God that taught us the Ten Commandments, the Apostles’ Creed and the Lord’s Prayer and many other beautiful prayers long before we remember anything! Oh, the mercy of God that sent to our old homes that good pastor who instructed us in the Word of God, though at the time we did not understand exactly what we were doing, but the seed was sown there, and it remained and brought forth a harvest, and today we are reaping its benefits! Oh, the mercy of God, that has been watching over us when we would have gone astray, and led us back again! Oh, the mercy of God that has thrown obstacles in our way that have kept us from going to destruction! Oh, the mercy of God that has led us throughout all our trials when mother was not with us, and when father was not with us, but has led us up to the present hour! And oh, the mercy of God

that reaches down and takes us up in His arms, for the Son of man is come to seek and to save the lost! Oh, the mercy of God that forgave us our many sins day after day until the present hour! Oh, the mercy of God that has kept us out of hell! Oh, the mercy of God that has given us the health and the strength not only to be Christians, but to be teachers and to show others the right way! Oh, the mercy of God that has kept us this hour and enabled us to sit here at the cross of Christ, to think of His will, of His sacrifice, and of His mercies! Think of these things, my friends, and then you will become efficient and sufficient teachers.

II. They Must Think of The World and The Church

Thinking Sunday school teachers must also think of the world and of the church.

“And be ye not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Be not conformed to this world.

1. What is this world?

It does seem to me that is a question that ought to stand before the minds of teachers day by day – What is the world? Do we mean this earth? Oh, no, the Church of God is on this earth. When we speak of the world, of people, as a rule we mean that part of the world that is still in darkness; that is not regenerated; that is not living a spiritual life. We speak of those people who are still in their natural state, and, as we heard this morning, there are many, many millions of people, not only in heathen lands, but all around us, who are simply living the animal life, trying to enjoy themselves, caring nothing whatever about the will of God; their whole object in life is to eat, drink, and wear new clothing, to be in style, to go on and get everything out of this life that can be gotten out of it, and let the future take care of itself. It is not very hard for you to understand what the world is; you can see it all around you; and you can not only see it all around you, but you can see a good deal of it right in you. If you will simply hunt up that spirit on this earth that

says, what is the difference what God wants; that says, what is the difference what the preacher says; that says, what is the difference what the church teaches, come on now, and have a good time, come on and sow your wild oats, come on and enjoy yourself; if God did not want you to do this and that, why did He give you the desire? So come on, and live just as any lower animal would live; you will find that is the world, and I say, dear teachers, you cannot help but think of that world if you want to be efficient teachers.

2. What is the Church?

On the other hand, you ought to get clear in your minds what the Church is. Remember, the Church is not made of stone, nor of brick; remember the Church is not a building; remember the Church is not made up of hypocrites; remember there is a Church militant and a Church triumphant, and remember that Church militant is still here on earth, and is mixed up with a great many people who call themselves Christians and are not; remember there are not many churches in the world, there is only one Church, and it is that which we confess in the Apostles' Creed when we say, I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Christian Church, and this Holy Christian Church is found there where the Holy Sacraments are administered according to His Word, and where the Word is preached in its purity; and those are members of God's Church who have put on Christ when they were baptized, and live in Him. There is a great difference between congregations, and the Church; there is a great difference between denominations and the Church. The Church is made up of all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, who are faithful unto Him until death, and at last shall receive the crown of eternal life. Congregations may have hypocrites in them – the Church of God has none. The apostle says the Church of God shall be without spot and without wrinkle. The Church of God, therefore, consists of faithful men and women who believe in God, and who are faithful until death, and will receive, therefore, the crown of eternal life.

When you think about the Church as it really is, and the world as it really is, you must notice the great difference between the two. "And be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds." From these words you can readily see that there is a great gulf between the world and the Church, and the only way to come from the

world to the Church is to make a transformation, and the transformation need not be a visible one, of your bodies, but it must be a mental transformation, a transformation of heart. A child of God is no more like he was when a child of the devil, than heaven is like hell. A Sunday school teacher must think on these lines and ask himself the question every day. Am I transformed, or am I still conformed to the world? There is a difference between the world and the Church, as there is a difference between the death of a child of God and a child of sin; as there must be a difference on the Judgment Day between a man that is saved and a man that is lost; as there must be a difference between a man in hell and a man in heaven. The Lord God said of Israel that He would take them out of Egypt, and show that there is a difference between Israel and Egypt, and in the present day it becomes absolutely necessary for every preacher, and for every teacher to think, and think, and think, until he can draw the line between the world and the Church.

If there is absolutely no difference between the world and the Church, then there is no use in having a Church, then there is no use in having a Sunday school. If it means after all that we are all going to be saved when we die, for my part I am willing to give up the Church. You understand what I mean. I maintain that to be a child of God requires a transformation that makes me think as I did not think before I was a child of God, and because I think differently now than I did before, I am no more in opposition to my thoughts as a Christian, than a child of the devil is in opposition to his thoughts as a child of the devil. Sunday school work and Church work is not to get a man that loves the devil to serve God, but to get the man that loves the devil to hate the devil and love God and serve Him. A transformation must take place in the teacher and the one to be taught, and unless we get clear in our minds that there is a line that is as evident as the gulf between heaven and hell, between church members and children of the devil, we never can be thinking Sunday school teachers.

III. Sunday School Teachers Must Work Together

This leads me finally to state that thinking Sunday school teachers must work harmoniously together, body and soul, man and God, man and man.

1. You must work harmoniously with yourself, body and soul.

"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Remember, dear teachers, that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and it is your duty to keep that body holy, to keep that body acceptable unto God, and to render a living sacrifice. You all understand what a sacrifice means, it means something that you feel. When Jesus Christ died on Calvary He did not take the strong drink that was to rob Him of feeling. He refused to take it because He wanted to die and feel the very sufferings of hell, that He might save you and me, and not until the stupor of death had come did He allow the vinegar to touch His lips. A sacrifice, therefore, means suffering. Now on our part we are not to die because we are Christians, or because we are Sunday school teachers, but we should make these bodies of ours work harmoniously with the soul for God. I say with the soul, for it is said here: "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." In other words, your mind must be transformed and become like the mind of Christ, and then your body must be used as a sacrifice to work harmoniously with your mind. You can sit at home and think and think, I ought to go and hunt up this Sunday school scholar, and I ought to go and see that one, and bring them to the house of God, but if you are thinking that way, and you are not willing to sacrifice your feet to let them walk, and not willing to sacrifice your body to go and do something; if you are not willing to lend your ears to hear, and your eyes to see, and make use of your body for the purpose of carrying out the thoughts of your mind, your work is all in vain – in fact, you are doing nothing. Can you not see, therefore, that to be a thinking Sunday school teacher, you must make your thoughts move your hands, and your feet, and your body in conformity with your thinking?

Not only must you have harmony between body and soul, but you must have harmony between man and God. In other words, we should not try to get God to do things the way we want them done, but we should try to do things the way God wants them done. "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and

perfect, will of God.” Let us, therefore, learn to work in harmony with God. I never knew a minister of the Gospel to fail in His ministry if he stuck right to the literal Word of God, if faithful in the teaching of that truth; and no Sunday school teacher will fail if he endeavors to conform himself entirely to the will of God and work harmoniously with Him. The great trouble is this, we get notions of our own and try to make God come and work with us instead of trying to get ourselves to work with Him.

The last thought I would give you tonight is this, that we should work harmoniously together, man and man. “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” We can easily see, dear friends, in our own bodily make up that we must be in harmony with ourselves. Man is made up of many different parts, and what would he do if any one part of his body would refuse to work in harmony with the other? Our hands are made to toil; our feet are made to walk; our eyes are made to see; our ears are made to hear; our mouths are made to speak, and eat, and sing songs of praise; every part of our body has its function, and unless these parts all work together, we call the man sick. If any one part of the body refuses to act, we say that man is an imperfect man. It does not kill a man to take off his hand, but, oh, how much better he could work if he had it. It will not necessarily kill a man to cut off one foot, but how much better he could walk if he had it. It does not kill a man necessarily to lose his sight, or to lose his hearing, but how much better he could get along with them. And so it is with regard to the Sunday school teachers. “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” It becomes our duty, therefore, first of all, when we work together as man and man, to remember that we have enemies that will make us all the trouble that we need. Do not think, dear teachers and superintendents, that because we have now and then matters that bother us, that therefore things are all upside down. I would call your attention to this great fact, that just as long as we as teachers and superintendents and pastor all work together for the spreading of God’s kingdom, that the devil will try his best to make us all the trouble he can; that the world itself will not rest, and that our own flesh will do its work. Do not forget that Christ told us we have three great enemies, the devil, the world, and our own flesh, and these three enemies you will always find where the kingdom of God is being

spread. You need not expect the devil to do very much harm in churches where they do not preach the Gospel in its purity, or in a church where they are not striving to spread God's kingdom or win souls heavenward, for he has his work done; there is nothing to do any more. The place the devil has work to do is where pastor and teachers and people are working for the downfall of Satan's kingdom, and you might just as well expect an army to come here and try to rob us of our government and we not fight, as to expect the devil, and the world, and the flesh to be satisfied if we are here to try to overthrow his kingdom. Therefore become not discouraged when you find there are many obstacles in the way, and that Satan sometimes comes into our midst and stirs up even some of our own, who are working for the downfall of Satan's kingdom.

Simply remember that we must work together; yes, we must go hand in hand. As I said a moment ago, a man with one hand is not a perfect man; a man with no eyes cannot do the work of a man with eyes; therefore let us, as teachers, work together, and pray together, that all teachers must come and work harmoniously with us. Whenever we want to do anything let us decide by a majority vote, and let that majority vote rule in all things except the doctrines of the Bible, which no man can overthrow. Remember that we must work harmoniously, if this work is to be successful, and pray for it, and pray for it until the kingdom of God shall be ruled entirely by harmonious action on the part of professed Christians.

Last of all, when we work together as man and man, let us remember that each one should know his place. "All members have not the same office." Again: "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy, according to the proportion of faith." Paul recognized the fact that we should all recognize, that God never intended that each one should have the mind of the other. What a good thing it is to have some one man who makes the best superintendent; some one man who makes the best assistant superintendent; some woman the best teacher for the little children and some one just fit for this class, and some one just fit for that class; and I cannot help thinking as I walk through our Sunday school here every Sunday morning what a blessed Sunday school it is, and how well nearly all of our teachers are fitted for the places they occupy. I thank God every day for my Sunday school teachers; I thank Him every day for one who is so efficient, and for others who are so efficient down in that department where the little infants are brought. I

cannot help thinking what a Godly woman is worth to the older infants, and what Godly women are worth to the little children; what it is worth to have men and women in our church that can teach the Bible so well to other men and other women; and what a blessing it is to have so many men and women studying God's word from Sunday to Sunday. When we stop to think that two thousand years ago the great Church of God had only eleven Sunday School scholars, and has grown up to be what it is today with four hundred and fifty millions of people, and then think of the six hundred¹ and more that we have in this church alone, what a mighty future we have before us if we simply stand hand in hand and heart to heart, each willing to do the will of God, and think deeply of His will, and of His great sacrifice, and of His great mercies; what a future we have before us if we think deeply of the world and of the church and of the great gulf between them, and if we have our bodies in harmony with our souls; if we have man joined to God, and man to man; if we work together against the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh, work in harmony and each one in his own place. Therefore, superintendent, know your place, and thank God that He has placed you where you are, as well as your assistant, and work together, with your pastors, for the upbuilding of God's kingdom. Officers, remember the special duty to which you have been called. You would not have been placed where you are if God had not seen fit to train you for that place, and therefore, be faithful. Do not forget the lesson of this first Sunday after Epiphany. Do not forget the first recorded words of Jesus: "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" Oh, dear teachers and officers, we have got some of our Father's business to do this coming year. Let us pray God that we may be about His business, and be faithful, carrying out the Word from day to day, until many souls shall be strengthened for the trials they shall meet, and many others shall be won for the kingdom of heaven. Would that every one of us would resolve before we go out of this house tonight, from henceforth to be about the Father's business. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast so blessed Thy Holy Word that these souls have been brought into Thy kingdom and rejoice in Thee. We ask Thee now to bless this message to our own souls.

Help us to be thankful to Thee that we have minds with which to think, and help us to develop these minds by thinking of Him who gave them. O Lord, today fill our minds with Thy will, and make our wills conform with Thine. Help these wills of ours to be cleared and purified by the blood of Thy sacrifice. We thank Thee that Thou hast delivered us from the world and brought us into Thy church. We pray Thee that Thou wilt help us not to place the church in that light that it cannot be distinguished from the world; and help us not to treat the world in such a way that it cannot be distinguished from the church. We pray Thee that Thou wilt help us to work together in this coming year as we never have before, and O Father in heaven, give us that desire to have the communion of the Holy Ghost with us, that we may pray for Him day by day to sanctify us wholly to His work. Give Thy special blessing to Brother Smith and Dr. Sattler as superintendents of this school; we pray Thee to give them special wisdom every day and special strength to do that which is best for the glory of Thy name. We pray Thee to be with all those teachers in this upper room, from the room where Brother Cummings teaches in one corner, to the room where Sister Cummings teaches in the other. May they all work hand in hand for the spreading of Thy kingdom. We ask Thy special blessing upon Mrs. Idleman, with all her assistants in the infant department. We ask Thy special blessing upon Miss Kline as superintendent of the home department. We ask Thy special blessing upon the choir of this Sunday School for their assistance in helping to praise God. We ask Thee, heavenly Father, to be with all those teachers who may be absent tonight; they may have reasons, O God, that are good in Thy sight, far better than we may know; we ask Thee to bless them. We pray Thee to bless the many scholars coming here from Sunday to Sunday; we pray Thee to give them a special interest in the lesson. We ask Thee to help that every teacher that can be here on Tuesday evening will be found in the teachers' meeting, not to please the pastor, not to please the superintendents, not to please the teachers, but to please Thee, O God. Hear this our prayer, and go with us all through life, and finally, when this school of life is all ended, take us home into the school of the holy angels, into the school of the saints on high, into the presence of Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray: Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into

temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

1. Now nearly 1200 enrolled.↩

11. Christians In Christ. Second Sunday After Epiphany.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless and curse not. Rejoice with them that do not rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." Rom. 12:6-16.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THE QUESTION THAT A FAITHFUL PASTOR must ask himself every day is not how many members there are in his church, but how many Christians. Are we Christians? That is the question ministers of the Gospel should ask themselves; that is the question church members should ask themselves; that is the question that comes home to us tonight with force when we consider the Gospel lesson which we have just read before this service. I wonder how many preachers there are in the United States today who are preaching a Christ crucified who made wine; I wonder how many there are who are preaching on the second chapter of John and the first eleven verses, the Gospel lesson selected for this day. I wonder how many there are who have the courage to stand up and say that Jesus Christ made wine which would make people intoxicated if they would drink enough of it. I wonder, furthermore, how many professed Christians there are today who, if their daughter were to be married, would invite Jesus Christ to the wedding,

providing it were understood that he would make one hundred and eight gallons of wine and set it out by the porch. I wonder how many people there are today who have the courage to stand by the true Word of God in all these things I have mentioned, and who are willing to live in Christ in order that they may work in Him as members of His body. We are told in the last verse of the text for last Sunday evening:

“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”

If we are in Christ, how could we live any other kind of a life but the one that Christ would have us live on earth? Let me ask the question tonight, How many of us are living in Christ?

Christians in Christ

is the theme which I hope the Holy Spirit will apply to your hearts tonight with force from on high. Christians in Christ will do two things:

- I. They will abhor that which is evil.
- II. They will cleave to that which is good.

I. Jealousy

“Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.”

That verse is the key to the text of the evening. There are certain things that every Christian in Christ must abhor, and the first that I would mention is jealousy.

1. Different Gifts

“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.”

We find that Christians have different gifts, and, having these different gifts, they are very apt to become just a little jealous of each other. You cannot imagine that any member of the human body is in conflict with the other. My right arm is not in conflict with my left; my eye is not in conflict with my ear, nor the ear with the eye. Not one member in a human body can be in conflict with the other, or dare to be jealous of the other's action, and any one member refusing to do its part, throws a burden on the other parts of that body. Just so it is with regard to the Christian. He is a member of the body of Christ, and every Christian is a member of the body of Christ. If one member is not satisfied with his position in life, with the gift that God has given him, and becomes jealous of others that have higher positions, he is not ready to do as it is said here he should do, to give honor to another. If there is any one thing in the world that a man must despise and abhor, if he lives in Christ Jesus, it is jealousy. You cannot imagine Jesus Christ jealous of any one. Did you ever see Him angry and envious because some one prospered more than He did? No. And yet there are people who call themselves professed Christians who cannot bear to see any one prosper. I have often thought if there is any one person in the world that ought to be free from jealousy, it is the minister of the Gospel, and yet I must confess that I have found just as much jealousy among ministers of the Gospel as among doctors or lawyers. The whole world is full of jealousy. Sin has brought pride into the world, and pride has planted jealousy into the hearts of the people, and even those best gifted are sometimes guilty of this great crime.

How much harm has been done in this world by jealousy! Look at the great battle fought down at Balaklava, which has been made the subject of Tennyson's song, sung of the Six Hundred who rode down to death:

“Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered;
Storm'd at with shot and shell.
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.”

But, my friends, four hundred and fifty of that six hundred fell upon that battlefield; and only one hundred and fifty came back. Why were there so many men slaughtered that day? All on account of one man being jealous of another. Had it not been that Lord Lucan was jealous of Lord Cardigton, Tennyson would not have written that poem, and four hundred and fifty men would not have been slaughtered on that field of death.

And thus we can look at the very death of Jesus Christ. It was the jealousy of the religious Pharisees, who could not bear to see a greater teacher than they in the city of Jerusalem. How many times we find in the Christian Church that just when everything seems to prosper most, there are hearts so full of jealousy they almost run over. They cannot be in Christ and have that jealous heart. Let us ask ourselves the question tonight, are we in Christ Jesus? If so, let us abhor that spirit that is apt to creep into each one of our hearts, and down it with all the power that God can give us.

2. Hypocrisy

Another thing we must abhor, if we are Christians in Christ, is hypocrisy. “Let love be without dissimulation.” Or, according to most translators, “Let love be without hypocrisy.” You cannot imagine Jesus Christ hypocritical; you cannot imagine He ever pretended to be anything He was not. He never stood up boldly and boasted that He was the Son of God, but rather said, “I am the Son of man,” and yet He could have said, “I am the Son of God” without boasting, and He did say it at times to give glory to the Father; but we find the Lord Jesus Christ putting the girdle around Him, and washing the feet of His disciples, teaching true humility. – Always humble, always the same Savior, because He is the Godman. How can you and I put on Christ and pretend to be what we are not? How can people pretend to be professed Christians when they are after all children of the devil?

How can we pretend to be followers of the humble Nazarene and be filled with pride? How can we pretend to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ on Sunday, and all week walk on paths He has forbidden? Let us abhor hypocrisy. Let us appear to be just what we are, nothing more, and nothing less.

3. Hatred

Another thing we must abhor if we are Christians in Christ is hatred. “Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.” Our Lord Jesus Christ loved every one. “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Jesus said, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” He sat down among sinners and ate with them. He said Himself, “The Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost. I love thee with an everlasting love.” How can any one be in Christ Jesus and not have love for his fellowmen? In other words, how can any one be in Christ Jesus and have hatred in his heart toward this one or that one? It sometimes occurs even in the Christian Church that when a certain one proposes anything, there are others who will fight it, just because they have hatred in their hearts toward that one. We cannot have that disposition and be in Christ Jesus. It is impossible. You might just as well expect the devil to live in the heart of Jesus Christ as to expect a man to dwell in Christ and have hatred in his heart toward any person on earth. The Word of God says love your enemies and do good to them which despitefully use you. How can you, dear hearer, have the spirit of hatred in your heart against your brother, against any person on earth, against your enemy, and live in Christ Jesus? It is impossible.

4. Laziness

Christians in Christ must also abhor laziness. “He that ruleth, with diligence... not slothful in business.” You cannot find that Jesus Christ ever was lazy; wherever you find Him, He is doing something; even when He sits down on the well for a moment to rest. He there converts the Samaritan woman. When the evening comes, and His disciples fall asleep, He goes up on the mountain to pray. When Peter, and James, and John, cannot keep awake any longer. He goes out into the garden of Gethsemane and sweats drops of blood. Even before He began His ministry He took His tools in His hand and helped His foster father to build houses and barns. Always working, always doing something. Without Me, He says, ye can do nothing. I cannot imagine any one in the world, living in Christ Jesus, sitting down, slothful in business, not diligent in his work. A man may be lazy as long as He is not spiritually alive; but how a man can become a real, genuine

Christian; how a man can actually believe, as we confess in the Creed, that there is an everlasting life, and everlasting punishment; how a man can believe that Jesus is the only way to heaven, and that there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby man can be saved; how a man can know there are eight hundred and fifty millions of people in the world that never heard of this Only Way; how a man can know that by the thousands they are perishing every moment, and can then sit down and idly say, I am a child of God, and I am in Christ, if everything else goes to destruction, I cannot understand. When a man is in Christ Jesus he must wake up and stop being slothful in business, in religion, in anything he may engage in. Ask yourself the question: Am I diligent or not? Am I busy or not? Am I in Christ Jesus? That will settle it. The feet of Jesus were walking, not resting; the hands of Jesus were blessing, not resting; He was busy all the time, and even when He awoke from the dead. He went to the gates of hell and cried, "Speak, hell, speak, where is thy victory? Behold, Satan, behold thy kingdom crushed!" He was out of the grave and was busy; He did not lose one moment; one hour at Emmaus; the next up in the little room with His disciples saying, "Peace be unto you." Wherever you find Him, He is doing good. You cannot put on Jesus Christ and sit down and do nothing. Christians must be busy people; they cannot be otherwise; they must abhor laziness.

5. Cursing

Again, they must abhor cursing. "Bless them which persecute you; bless and curse not."

Once in a while we find professed Christians who do not deny but that they may now and then utter a word that may be called by the best definition cursing; they call it a weakness; but I would have you understand that you cannot live in Christ Jesus and have that weakness; you cannot be in Christ and curse. Imagine Jesus Christ standing before this altar tonight, and I in Christ Jesus and I begin to curse; every one of you would say that is not Christ. How then can you, as professed Christians, dwell in Christ Jesus and have a cursing tongue in your mouths? The second commandment says, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, and that is the Word of Christ in whom the Christian dwells.

6. Pride

Not only is it true that we must abhor cursing, but we should also abhor pride. “Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate.” How often we find even professed Christians trying to live a life away above the average people. How many there are that are ashamed to associate with the common people. How many there are that would never go down into the slums, or work among the poor, or offer to assist them. How many there are who seem to think it is wise to use big words which no one can understand; who seem to think it is a good thing to belong to a church that is called aristocratic; who seem to think it is wise to appear high headed. My dear friends, Jesus Christ never belonged to any aristocratic church; Jesus Christ never walked around dressed in pride; Jesus Christ was not ashamed to take the poor by the hand and assist them; Jesus Christ was not willing to stone a poor woman because she had made a mistake; He was perfectly willing to get right down at the feet of the disciples and wash them, teaching them to be truly humble. When Jesus Christ was willing to do those things, how can you think you are so much better than any one else? How can you be proud? Remember that pride was the fall of the angel that became the devil; he fell on account of his pride; and he planted that pride into the heart of the natural man. If we stop to think that we are but dust; that before long we will be at the cemetery, going down into a hole five feet deep, and some poor mortal will say at the head of that grave, “Earth to earth; ashes to ashes; dust to dust;” remembering that we are becoming food for worms; remembering the sins we have committed; remembering that we have not a single gift that God cannot take away from us in a single moment, then why is there anything in us that should make any of us proud? If we live in Christ Jesus, we must abhor pride as we abhor the devil himself.

7. Sin in Any Form

And thus I might go on, but any one who has read that text will realize at once that it admonishes against sin in any form. “Abhor that which is evil,” says the Apostle Paul. It is not hard to know what evil is. Evil is sin, and sin is the transgression of the law. God’s law says that He is the true and living God and we should have no other gods before Him; therefore abhor idolatry

and Christless religions. The law of God says we shall not take His name in vain; therefore if you find your child cursing and using God's name in vain, punish that child so that it will be the last time it will ever be guilty of that sin. The law of God demands of us that we remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. If you find that you are living on Sunday as though there were no Lord's Day; if you find that you are lounging around instead of going to God's house; if you find that some daily paper is more interesting to you than God's Holy Word, remember that God said. Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy; and if you find that God's Word is not your highest treasure you are there loving an evil that you ought to abhor. If you are not treating father and mother as you ought to, abhor that evil. If you do not love humanity, then you are a murderer; abhor that hatred. If you are not living a pure life, abhor yourself on account of that adultery. If you have taken one thing that is not your own, abhor yourself as a thief. If you have been guilty of telling things that are not true, abhor the lie for it is evil. If you are setting your heart upon things that ought not to belong to you, abhor that heart of covetousness. And so I would have you look over the category of all God's commandments, and whenever you disobey them, look upon those things as evils which you must abhor, if you would be a Christian in Christ.

II. "Cleave to that Which is Good"

The other side of the same great truth is this: "Cleave to that which is good." The verses previous to the text will show us what we are to cleave to. "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Your right arm must cleave to your body; your left arm must cleave to your body; all your members must cleave to your body, or you will cease to be a complete man, and therefore, I say, we must all cleave to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Oh, cling to Him! Cling to Him while you live; cling to Him in the hour of death; cling to Him in all eternity!

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!
Let the water and the blood.
From Thy riven side that flowed,
Be of sin the double cure.
Save me, Lord, and make me pure.”
Cling to Him!

“But drops of blood can ne’er repay
The debt of love I owe;
Here Lord, I give myself away;
'Tis all that I can do.”
Cling to Him!

“Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life,” says Jesus. Cling to Him! “Him that Cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.” Cling to Him! “As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked should turn from his evil way and live.” Cling to Him!

2. The Word of God

Not only should we cling to Jesus, but to the Word of God.

“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation.”

You will notice all these words pertain to the searching of God’s Word in one form or another. “Cleave to that which is good.” If I were to leave it to a vote tonight which is the best Book in the world, ninety-eight out of a hundred persons would say the Bible is the best Book in the world. We all know it is the best Book. You sometimes hear people say the Word of God teaches things that are bad. If that Book taught things that are bad, every bad boy in Mansfield would want one. I never saw a bad boy in my life that wanted a Bible. I never saw a bad boy in my life that did not want bad books. I never saw a bad man in my life that did not want bad books. If some man were to run down street tonight, with some one crying, Stop, thief! and he were to drop a book, and some one picking it up would say, it is a Bible, very few people would believe either that it was a Bible, or that

the man was a thief. If the same man should run down street, and they would cry out "Horse thief," and he would drop a bottle, every one would believe it. You do not find this Book in the pocket of a thief. The Word of God is a good Book. I know that this world is bad enough, my friends, but what would it be without this Book? What would you and I be without this Book? I am willing to confess tonight that if it had not been for this Book, and some good people that this Book has made, that I for one, would be the worst man in the world. Whenever I do a bad deed I do not care to look into my Bible for the next hour. Whenever I do the best deed that I can do, I love to look into the Bible. My friends, this is the great Book that we want when we are born; it is the Book we want along the path of life; it is the Book, O mothers and fathers, that you must put into the trunk of your boys and girls when they go away from home; it is the Book that you must place on the table and the altar of the home; it is the Book the words of which must be put into the minds of our children. These catechumens coming to me every Saturday afternoon, most of whom have already learned the Sermon on the Mount, cannot be lost without their own responsibility. What I want is to make people feel their responsibility. I used to think, when I first entered the ministry that if people were lost it was my fault. No, it is not. But it is my fault if I do not show them the way to be saved. After they have heard the words of this good Book, how to repent of their sins, how to believe in Christ and to find salvation, then the responsibility rests with them and not with me. Hold to the old Word of God!

3. The Divine Service

Not only hold to the Word of God, but I would have you hold to the Divine service. Paul said to these Romans, who had different gifts, that they should all do something. "...whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith." Some were to explain the Scriptures. Some had other work to do around the church "...or ministry, let us wait on our ministering." Some were to teach the Scriptures "...or he that teacheth, on teaching" "...or he that exhorteth, on exhortation." Some were to attend to the distribution of gifts, "he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity." Some were to have special authority "... he that ruleth, with diligence." Some were to labor with hands of mercy "he that soweth mercy, with cheerfulness." In other words, the Apostle Paul says there is something for

every church member to do; there is something for every Christian to do who is in Christ, and the thing for him to do is to come to the Divine service and hear God's Word, and help sing songs of praise to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; to join in the confession of faith. You take one coal and lay it by itself, and it is soon black; but take a number of them, and put them together, and a flame will start up that will burn. And so if you stay at home, in a short time your heart will become black with sin; but meet with God's people, as you have today, and join voice to voice, until like one great flame the hearts of men all look upward, and there is an inspiration in a Christian congregation and in a Divine service that you can never overthrow. God said, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I will be in the midst of them." Hold, therefore, to the Divine service.

4. God's Mercy

Furthermore, I would have you all hold to God's mercy. "...he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness." How merciful Jesus Christ was when those men came with stones in their hands, ready to kill the woman who had been caught in sin. Jesus said, the first one that has not sinned, may stone her; then He went and wrote in the sand; and you remember what tradition says about that writing; He began to write in the sand the sins committed by the first one who was ready to throw the stone; then what the second man had done; and then what the third had done, and, looking over His shoulder, they saw He was writing their own sins, and they vanished away; He looked around; they were not there. Where are the man ready to kill this woman? Did Jesus Christ take up a stone and kill her? No. He said, Go and sin no more. Oh, what mercy! What mercy He had upon her! The thief on the cross who had been cursing and abusing Him for being one of their own number, hears a voice, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do;" in a short time he notices he is hanging by the side of the Son of God, and cries out, "Remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom!" Did Jesus say, I will show you? did He say, I will have revenge on you? did He say, I will damn you? No. "today thou shalt be with Me in paradise." Oh, the mercy of Christ! The mercy of Christ, my friends, ought to move us to have mercy on each other. The mercy of Christ, if we are in Him, should move our hands to stretch out and take hold of a fallen woman and lift her

up; to take hold of a fallen man and lift him up. I am here to say the fallen woman is just as welcome to my class as the best people in the world; that the fallen boy is the one I would love to reach down and lift up; and when we get the spirit and the mercy of Christ in us, then we will find something good to hold to.

5. God's Brotherly Love

Hold not only to His good mercy but to His brotherly love. "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love." When we come to weigh the reasons why some people hate each other, what insignificant reasons they are. Why does any man hate me? I often ask that question. Is it because I do not work hard enough? Is that the reason? Is it because I am not praying enough for you? Is that the reason? Is it because I am not faithful to my God? Is that the reason? I sometimes wonder what it is. What is it? Oh, what a comfort it would be if I could just know why it is some people do not like me. I am not worrying, my friends, for myself, not at all, but I worry for you; I worry for the man that hates anybody; I worry for the man that has not got brotherly love for his fellowmen. Oh, if some one were murdering your own family, even then God would say to you, pray for him and bless him; but when one is trying with all his might and power to save immortal souls, to save you, what is it? What is it? What is it that you are hating? O God, what is it? What is it? Isn't it time that we are asking the question, are we in Christ Jesus? If we are in Christ Jesus we ought to love whom Jesus loves; but Jesus loves us all, and how could we be in Christ Jesus and not love everybody? Hold fast to the brotherly love of Christ.

6. Divine Enthusiasm

If you are in Christ Jesus, you should cling also to Divine enthusiasm, "... not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." This word fervent means, literally, boiling; in another sense it means burning. – Have a burning, a boiling, spirit within you. In other words, be filled with the spirit of enthusiasm. Jesus Christ was enthusiastic. Notice the spirit of Christ when He comes to the, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" Notice the enthusiasm with which He goes into His work in all His sermons. He spoke with an enthusiasm that held the people from the time

He began until He closed. No difference where He went, into the desert, or upon the mountain, or on some little vessel along the shore, the multitudes crowded upon Him, because there was a Divine enthusiasm that held them spellbound. We ought to hold fast to Divine enthusiasm. I say Divine. There is a fanatical enthusiasm which leads people astray; but Divine enthusiasm seeks out the will of God, and having found the will of God, you pray over it, and keep on praying until the flame burns in the heart. Savonarola of old said, "I must speak, and save Florence, or the very marrow in my bones will burn."

If these things are true that we find in the Word of God, it should not only make us diligent, but it should make us burn in soul and heart for the salvation of immortal souls. If you love your enemy, pray for him. If he despitefully uses you, reach out your hand of love. If there is a man on earth whom you can bring to Christ Jesus with a burning heart, reach out and bring him to the Master, and you have done a work that you ought to encourage, which shall give you joy, in the midst of tribulation "... rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you; bless and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."

The Savior was enthusiastic. In the midst of joy He rejoiced; in the midst of tears, with Mary and Martha, He wept. In the midst of joy let us rejoice; when we come to those who are mourning and in trouble, let us be in sympathy with them; show that our hearts are weeping with theirs. Let us show to those deeply afflicted that our hearts are with them, and stand by them as Christ would stand by them. Rejoicing as Christ would rejoice, let us go forth, holding fast to Divine enthusiasm.

7. Liberality

Last of all, hold fast to the spirit of liberality. "According to the grace that is given us ...he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity." When the Lord Jesus gave to any one, he did not make them feel under obligations. How many times we find when people do a good act, they do it in such a way as to publish it to the world; in such a way as to make one feel it, and feel it, and feel it, that now we have done something for you. Let us learn to be in Christ Jesus, and, being in Him, no difference what we give to any one, give

it with such little ostentation and such sympathy that they hardly feel they are getting it, and yet gain a great benefit. That is the way we should cultivate the spirit of liberality, and hold fast to it.

“Distributing to the necessity of saints.” How many Christians there are in the world that need help, to say nothing of the people who are living a sinful life, and are simply reaping their harvest by having nothing when old age comes on; I am speaking of people who are honest, upright, saving and working every day, but they meet with misfortune; the time comes when they may not, on account of sickness or otherwise, provide for their families. The Christian Church ought to recognize that we are one family. In a large family we do not find that when the daughter is sick, she is allowed to starve; the sisters and brothers that are well, work the harder, because there is one lying at home with typhoid fever. In the Church of God we are all one family; then how can we see a brother sick for a year and simply say, Let him go to his lodge, or to his own family, when sometimes his own family cannot help? I claim that if we are in Christ we will do as Christ would do; we will go to the other member and help. If my right hand is sore and cannot work, my left hand must do the work. If we are all members in Christ, then let not one member suffer without the others helping.

And this should not only be true with regard to saints’ this should be true with regard to our conduct in our own homes – “given to hospitality.” It does seem to me that we are losing just what the Apostle Paul meant when he said, “given to hospitality;” we are losing even what our fathers had. I cannot forget one old home where nearly every day some one was sitting down at the table and eating with us; I cannot forget, either, how little trouble it was for mother to do these things; she knew just how to entertain many people without much trouble. In these days we imagine that unless we can have a very fine feast we cannot have any one to sit down at our table, and we are losing hospitality and getting more and more selfish. Oh, that the days would return when we could go into a house at any time at meal time and sit down and eat a bite of bread and drink a cup of water and thank God for them, and restore the old hospitality. Jesus did not announce beforehand that He was coming to see Mary and Martha; He was welcome any hour; and this spirit that He had for them and they for Him, we should have in ourselves. Jesus was so hospitable that when He saw His disciples out on the water, He already had the bread and fish prepared for them when

they came to the shore. Whenever He had a bite He divided it among His disciples.

When a great number of His disciples were very hungry, and He had only a few loaves and fishes, He did not satisfy His own hunger first, but blessed the food, handed it to His disciples and told them to carry it out to the people, and He fed them all, and gathered up the crumbs, and we do not know that He even took a bite. How hospitable Jesus was! If we are in Christ Jesus we ought to have that hospitality in our own homes. Oh, let us cultivate liberality and love for the poor, wherever we can do them good.

I have in mind this morning a certain rich man who was always praying for the poor, praying that God might by all means keep them from freezing in the winter and from starving. This rich man had his own granaries full of grain, and when a poor man would come to him and ask for a little of this or of that, he would always answer, "I have just provided enough for myself," and send him away, and yet he kept on praying, "O God, feed the poor; feed the poor." This man was not in Christ to the same extent that his little son was. One morning, when his father was praying, and praying, and praying for the poor, so earnestly, after he had said Amen, the little boy said, "Father, I do wish I owned all the barns you do." "Why, my son?" "Oh, if I did, I would just answer your prayers." Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast given us this blessed Word, which is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. We thank Thee that we are permitted to live in Christ Jesus, and, living in Him, that we can walk in His footsteps, and that we can be lights in the world. We thank Thee that the great Light of the world has said to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world," and now we pray Thee, make every Christian in this house tonight a real light that shall shine with abhorring that which is evil, and cleaving to that which is good. O Father in heaven, if there be any jealousy, hypocrisy, hatred, slothfulness, cursing, pride, any sin of any kind in our hearts, help us tonight to abhor that evil; on the other hand, help us to cling to Jesus Christ, cling to His Word and the means of grace, to cling to the Divine service, to cleave to God's mercy, to hold to His brotherly love, to cling with Divine enthusiasm, and to be filled with

the spirit of liberality; and thus, heavenly Father, help us to be instant in prayer, constantly calling upon Thee, and with our hands doing what we can for Thy glory and for the welfare of humanity. Give Thy blessing to this large congregation tonight, and as we go out of the doors of this church, may we all, if we have not already, enter the doors of eternal life. Jesus, do Thou receive us into Thine heart, and walk with us through life, protect us, with Thy righteousness cover our sins, and lead us home to the Father as Thy beloved children. Hear this, our prayer, for the sake of the Christ who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

12. The Conflict Of The Christian In Christ. *Third Sunday After Epiphany.*

Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Rom. 12:16-21.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Dearly Beloved:

THIS TEXT, as you will perceive, is only a continuation of the texts of the last two Sundays, found in the twelfth chapter of Romans. Last Sunday evening we heard how the Christian in Christ must abhor evil and cleave to that which is good. The Christian in Christ must not only abhor the evil and cleave to the good, but he must enter the conflict that takes place between good and evil. It is impossible for good and evil to dwell together, just as much as it is for darkness and light to remain in the same room; the one must expel the other, and consequently Christianity in its truth and purity is a battle. The apostle Paul said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." We sang just a few moments ago that beautiful hymn:

"Am I a soldier of the Cross,
A follower of the Lamb;
And shall I fear to own His cause,
Or blush to speak His name?"

And now that you have sung that first stanza, I wonder what your answer is to the question, are you a soldier of the Cross, or are you a soldier of the devil? Are you a follower of the Lamb, or a follower of Satan? Are you on the narrow way, battling for righteousness toward heaven, or are you on the broad way that leads to destruction? There is no question about what a Christian's attitude ought to be if he is in Christ.

“Sure I must fight if I would reign:
Increase my courage, Lord;
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by Thy Word.”

I call your attention this morning to

The Conflict Of The Christian In Christ

The conflict is mentioned in the last verse of our text when it is said, “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

I. The Christian in Christ must not let evil overcome him

This may be done according to the words of our text, in three different ways: By thinking he is too smart to learn anything; by seeking revenge, and by selling truth for peace.

1. “Be not wise in your own conceits.”

The human mind is prone to think itself very wise, and one of the reasons so many people think they are wise is because their minds are so poorly developed that they fail to see the many things concerning which they know nothing. When you were small, you imagined that your house was a very large house; you imagined that the hills around your home were very large hills, but when you began to travel around in the world, you saw the Rocky Mountains, and then you came home and were surprised to find what little banks those were that you formerly thought were such great hills; and when

you have gone into the larger buildings of the world, you were surprised to find how little the rooms were where you were born. When I stood in my old home the other day and looked up at the ceiling, I could not imagine that was the same house I used to live in; my head nearly touched the plastering, and we used to think that was a big house. So it is with regard to the human mind; when one imagines he knows it all, and there is nothing for him to learn any more, he is filled with his own conceit, and instead of permitting evil to be overcome, evil has overcome him. The one thing we should all learn is to know ourselves. The old Greek motto, "Know Thyself," was written over the door, that the children might read it every day, and nothing has ever been able to make us know ourselves as the revelation of God, the Word which we hear from day to day out of the old Book. Let me then advise you in this evening hour, not to get, as the apostle Paul calls it, "heady;" do not get such a big head on your shoulders that you imagine what you do not know is not worth knowing, and that for you it is impossible to learn anything more. Oh, what a fool the man is in the home when he thinks the wife knows nothing, and that even the children never know anything. What a fool the woman is in the home when she imagines that she knows; it all, and the husband and father knows nothing at all. What a fool a servant is in the home when he imagines he knows more than his master or mistress; and what a fool a young man or woman is when they think they know so much more than their parents. Let us beware that we are not overcome of evil, and I know of no way that one can be overcome of evil sooner than simply to get conceity, and think, for me there is nothing to learn; I know it all, and when I die wisdom will die with me. This life is too short and our human minds are too small ever to be thoroughly convinced that we are right on everything. Even as ministers of the Gospel we sometimes make the mistake to think we are absolutely sure that we are right and cannot be mistaken. There are men who will hold their hands up to heaven and say, I know that Jesus Christ was immersed, and they do not know anything about it; there are men who will hold their hands up toward heaven and say, I know my church is absolutely right in all things, and the rest are wrong where they differ with us. While I believe that, I want to tell you that I would be a conceited fool if I held my hand up to heaven and said, it is absolutely impossible that we might be in error on some things. If you want evil to overcome you, then simply get that big head that thinks

nothing can go into it any more, and you have won one victory, you have got a head that nothing will go into any more; there is no room for it.

2. We must not let evil overcome us by seeking revenge.

“Recompense to no man evil for evil.... Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.”

That spirit of revenge is just as natural as it is to be born a sinner. The little child is hardly old enough to sit on its mother's lap before it is ready to slap her in the face. The little boy or the little girl does not need to be old until they watch for a chance to throw stones at the one that threw at them. If there is anything that is heathenish, anything positively sinful, anything that makes one to be overcome instead of overcoming, it is that spirit of revenge that dwells in the heart of the natural man. We may think that if we can just find an opportunity to say a hard, cutting thing concerning the one that said a hard cutting thing about us, or to strike the one that struck us, that we have shown ourselves to be manly, or that we have won a glorious victory, but the real truth is, when any man on earth does a mean act toward me, if he can get me to do just as mean an act toward him, I am conquered instead of conquering; just in that moment I cease to be a true man. A man does not need to be much of a man to strike back at the one that struck him. I think one of the homeliest animals that ever lived is noted for being one of the worst kickers, and about every time you hit him, he strikes back; and you can be just that kind of an animal by seeking revenge, and instead of overcoming evil, evil has overcome you. How little one becomes when he is simply watching for an opportunity to say something hateful, and do some dastardly deed toward the man that has harmed him.

Not many years ago in heathen Africa, a missionary witnessed this scene. Two neighbors were at variance with each other; both of them too cowardly to meet face to face; but one knew that the little daughter of his enemy was going along the way to school, and, hiding along the pathway, when the little girl came along, he caught her, held her arms down on a block, took his axe and cut her hands off; sent her home, bleeding, and he cried out to his neighbor, “Now I am avenged!” Oh, horrible picture! and yet a true picture of every one who is trying to recompense evil for evil, of one who is not willing to let vengeance be in the hands of God. My dear

friends, there is One who has all things in His power; there is One who is going to bring about a Judgment Day that will settle all wrongs. If you wrong me, God knows it, and if I wrong you, God knows it, and there is a day coming when God will make all things right. There is no use in my worrying about anything that you have done to wrong me; I am willing to leave that in the hands of my great and loving Master. When the little child has told its father what the neighbor's child did, that father, if he is a father, will see that justice is done, and nothing more, and so the apostle Paul says, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

3. Sacrificing Truth for Peace

The conflict of the Christian in Christ would furthermore lead him not to sacrifice truth for peace.

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

This epistle has often been called the epistle of peace. If there was any one thing the apostle Paul loved, being a Christian in Christ, it was peace, and yet he knew there were some people in this world with whom it is simply impossible to be at peace; there are some people who cannot bear peace; they do not love it, and they absolutely will not have it. With some people we are not commanded to always have peace. In other words, it is said here, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." It is my duty as a Christian in Christ to be at peace with all men, but it is not my duty as a Christian in Christ to make every man be at peace with me. If there are some people who do not want peace, I cannot help it. When we look at the men of old, who were real Christians, we find that they never had peace with everybody. Look at the old prophets. Moses was a man of God, and yet when he went down into Egypt to deliver the children of Israel, Pharaoh rebelled against him. God Almighty showed which one was in the right; one plague after the other came, demonstrating that Moses was right and Pharaoh wrong. When the locusts came and ate every vine and every green thing, until it was such a curse as he had never felt before, Pharaoh came to Moses and said, "I have sinned. I pray of thee ask God to take this great plague away." Did Moses say, I will not do it? Did Moses

glory in the fact that now he had revenge on Pharaoh? No. He prayed God to let a strong wind come to take the locusts away from his enemy. He tried to be at peace, but could not.

This is not only true of Moses, it is true of Elijah. Elijah was a man of God such as there were few in the Old Testament times. There was a great king who was bound to have peace, on a wrong basis. There were eight hundred and fifty false preachers on that day that were bound to have peace, on a false basis. Elijah said, I am glad to have peace with you, but I want peace on the basis of right; I am not going to sell truth for peace, if all the world is against me; and he stood on Mt. Carmel that day, a man of God, all alone, as far as human eyes could see, but he stood there as a man of God who would not sacrifice truth for all the world, even if it cost his life. He wanted to demonstrate on that mountain that Jehovah is the true and living God, and not Baal. Elijah could have no peace with Jezebel; he could have no peace with Ahab; he could have no peace with the ungodly worshipers of idols. And thus we may go on down through history.

Look at Jesus Christ, Himself. He was the Prince of Peace, and yet He Himself could not have peace with all people. I call attention to Matt. 10:35: "For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." A Christian in a heathen family means war in that family. I call attention again to Luke 14:26 where the Savior shows the difference between human love and our love to our Savior: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." I wonder how many of us would stand the test on the basis of that remark of Christ. How many of us would follow Christ even if father says no, even if mother says no, even if brothers and sisters say no. How many of us love Christ so much that our great love to our parents compared with our love to Christ, is as hatred? That is what Jesus demands of His disciples. So you see that even Christ Himself could not be at peace with all people. There was Peter, who drew the sword and cut off the ear of Malchus. Did the Lord Jesus Christ go on and say, that is right; I am glad of it? No. He took the ear and held it to his head, and healed it, to show us how to treat our enemies. Did Jesus Christ have peace with the Pharisees, and with the Sanhedrin? No. He could not afford to sell truth

and have it sacrificed on account of principle. It was principle that made Jesus Christ die on Calvary.

Look at Luther. Dr. Luther might have had peace with John Calvin, and with Zwingli, and with all the reformers; they held out their hands and said. Dr. Luther, we are willing to admit that you are the hero of the Reformation, but there are one or two points upon which we disagree, and now we ask of you to extend the hand and we will call it all right; it is only a difference of opinion. Dr. Luther said, I cannot afford to sell truth for peace. I cannot afford to sacrifice the truth in this great work of the Reformation. The real truth of it is, if you are right, then we have no Lord's Supper, and if I am right, then you have none; consequently the truth must stand at my cost; I will stand alone rather than sell the truth. And so we need men in the present day that will not let themselves be overcome of evil. It becomes our duty to know the teachings of God's Word and as we understand them, to stand by them at any cost.

II. Overcome Evil With Good

In the conflict of the Christian in Christ, he must not only not let evil overcome him, but he must overcome evil with good.

1. First of all, by living a strictly honest life.

“Provide things honest in the sight of all men.”

How often we must hear it said in the best circles, there are church members who do not pay their grocery bills; that there are church members who go home drunk; that there are church members that will curse and swear like heathen; that there are Sunday School teachers that are living just as worldly as the world itself; that there are preachers of the Gospel that are not living as they preach. My dear friends, there is nothing that so hurts the church of God as inconsistent Christian membership. As I said last Sunday evening, how can you be in Christ and live a life like a child of the devil? He that is baptized into Christ puts on Christ. If I am a Christian in Christ, my conflict must be the conflict of Christ Himself. If I were to say that man staggering up street, drunk, is Jesus Christ, who would believe me? No man

on earth would believe me. If I were to say that Jesus Christ does not pay His grocery bills, who would believe me? If I were to say that man standing among his fellow laboring men cursing and swearing, is Jesus Christ, who would believe me? Not one. The Christian in Christ dare not do what would put his Savior to shame. We have a word here translated honest that means good, upright, living such a life that no man can question as to what he really is. I make a plea this morning for a conflict in Christ, to overcome evil, and to overcome it by a life that must substantially ask the question, what would Jesus do today and what can I do for Him? Give me five hundred members in a church who are living as Christ wants them to live, and I will show you a power that is bound to make the whole city quake. Do you want to know why we are so weak in all our different churches? It is because the world can see one inconsistent member quicker than a hundred consistent ones. One man in a church complaining, makes more fuss than a hundred who keep quiet. One man cursing and swearing makes more of an impression against the church than five hundred prayers for it. I would, therefore, make a plea this morning for every professed Christian to remember that he has a conflict, a conflict against the devil, a conflict against his own flesh, a conflict with the world, and this conflict must be carried on in such a way that whatever else may be said against a man, it cannot be said he is dishonest; it cannot be said he is not trying to live a righteous life.

Oh, dear friends, when we have tried our best, I know we will all blunder, I know we will all make mistakes, but there is one thing, God helping me, I do not want said after I am dead, and that is that I did not try to live a righteous life. I do not want it said when this tongue is silent that he did not even try to live as a Christian should live in Christ, and I hope that may be said of none of us.

2. The Cross of Peace

So we must overcome evil with good by carrying the very cross of peace with us.

“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.”

I call your attention especially to that little phrase, “as much as lieth in you.” Do not go home and say our pastor said we cannot live at peace with some of our neighbors, therefore, we are not going to speak to them; therefore, we are going to live right on, like we did. I want to ask you this question, if you have any foe in the world today, have you done all that you could to have peace? I want it distinctly understood that God’s Word does not tolerate hatred in the heart of the Christian. God’s Word does demand of me that I do all in my power to have peace with all my foes and with all my fellowmen. On the 3rd of last December morning it was just one hundred and five years that a great battle took place between the Austrians and the French. That morning the parents sent their little children to school to the great Klausner; that morning little did the parents dream that before school was out the path of those children would be running red with the blood of two armies. When the cannon began to roar and the swords began to flash, the teacher and the children gathered in the school house and saw what was going on. The question in that teacher’s mind was how to take those children home, how to take them over that battlefield between the school house and their homes. He went to the chapel and took down a large wooden cross, placed the little children two by two in a line, and at the head of them he walked across the center of that battlefield. When they saw that great teacher, with the little ones, with the cross of Christ uplifted, the cannons stopped their roaring and the swords were sheathed, and he took safely home every little child. It was the cross of Christ that stayed the power of the cannons and guns between the French and the Austrians, and there you have a picture of the cross of peace.

If we want peace with all men, as much as lieth in us, let us pray God to take revenge out of our hearts, and take up the cross of Christ, and live so close to Jesus that wherever we go we hold up that cross. I want to tell you there is nothing in all the world that will produce harmony and peace like the cross of Christ. Up until the time that cross was planted on Calvary, men had the courage to walk up and slap Jesus in the face; they had the courage to scourge His back; they had the courage to spit in His face, but when once He was nailed on that cross, bearing the sins of the world, the great commander at the head of a hundred men, stood there and smote upon his breast and said, Surely this is the Son of God. From that time on no hand touched Jesus to murder Him; no hand touched Him to slap Him, and never

will. The cross of Christ has subdued more enemies than any power there ever was or ever will be.

3. Conquering With Kindness

This leads me to say that in the conflict of the Christian in Christ, he must overcome evil with good by conquering his enemy with kindness.

“Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink, for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.”

The Lord Jesus taught in the sermon on the mount that we should pray for our enemies, bless them that curse us and pray for them which despitefully use us. It is not an easy matter to carry that out practically. When a man comes up to me and strikes me in the face, the first thing I will think of is to strike back. It takes a wonderful training for a man to pray for the one who strikes him in the face, but I want it distinctly understood that God does give Christians the power to pray for their enemies; He does give them power to treat them well; and when you do that, you are heaping coals of fire on their heads. Of course there are some irons so hot that you cannot make them any hotter by heaping coals over them, and there are some fools so full of hell that even coals of fire on their heads are not felt. There are some people you cannot even conquer with kindness, but I want to say right here that the greatest power on earth to conquer an enemy is simply to treat him well.

Look at Joseph. His jealous brothers took him, and sold him; some were even ready to murder him; but when they ran out of corn and came back to Egypt, they were very glad to be fed by their brother whom they had sold, and when the great conflict was over, and old father Jacob was dead, those eleven brothers said, now we have got to go and fix this thing up or he will take our lives; father is dead; and there is no telling what he may do. So they sent a messenger ahead to tell him that father said before he died that he should forgive them for having sold him. Then when they saw the countenance of Joseph, they came themselves and fell down before him, fulfilling the dream of the sheaves that should bow before him, and Joseph in all his kindness said, “Ye meant it unto evil, but God meant it unto good,” and he heaped coals of fire upon the heads of his brothers.

This was not only done by Joseph, it was done by Stephen. You remember how they stoned that good man to death. Oh, the history of the world, what a shame it is! Good Stephen, the man looking out for the poor; the man who hunted up those in trouble and helped them; the sinful world could not bear it, and so they picked up stones and began to hurl them at good Stephen, until he fell down, and, like his Master, prayed, "Father, lay this sin not to their charge;" he prayed for his enemies and he heaped coals of fire on their heads.

Look at Jesus Christ Himself, on the cross, praying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." There was another man hanging on the cross by His side that just then felt a coal burning on the top of his head, and it burned down into his conscience, and burned down into his heart, and made him cry out, "Remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom! O my Savior, Thou hast burned my heart with Thy kindness! Save me!" and Jesus saved him – heaped coals of fire upon his head.

During the beginning of the great Christian era there was one heathen named Milas, and his wife, who not only were opposed to the Christian Church, but hired themselves out as agents to hunt up Christians that they might be sacrificed in the arena and killed on account of their faith. These two people had gathered in more Christians to be eaten by the lions and to be slaughtered, than any heathen of that day. One time this heathen got very sick, and ran out of provisions; the Christians heard about it, and went to his little house, walked in and presented him with the things necessary for this life, and told him how they loved him. He simply moaned and groaned when he saw the faces of those Christians whom he had sought that they might be eaten by the lions. The wife began to moan and groan, and cried "Ye gods, I see the faces of those whom we have tried to bear to the lions to be slaughtered! How came they here, and how can they treat us so kindly?" The Christians gave them their gifts, had a prayer, and started home. The old heathen moaned and groaned; he felt the power of the fiery coals, but his time was short and he passed into eternity. After he was buried the Christians came back and said to the widow, "We will take care of you, and of your children; we will love you though you have persecuted us;" then she fell down on her face and cried, "O my God, how can I stand it, and how can I give thanks to these people, and what shall I do?" "Then one of the leaders lifted her up and said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," and she was saved, and her whole house was

saved, but she never could forget the power of the burning coals upon her head.

You will remember I told you a few moments ago about that heathen in Africa who cut off the hands of the little girl, and said “Now I am avenged!” There is another side to that picture, I want to give you now. Time passed on and that man got very poor, and as a beggar went from house to house. The little girl’s life was spared and she grew to womanhood. One day a beggar came to her home and asked for something to eat. Holding her arms under her apron, she invited him to the table, asked him to sit down, and ordered placed before him a good warm meal, that he might eat. After he had eaten, and stood up, and said, “I haven’t had such a good meal for a long time, and I thank you for your kindness,” she held her mutilated arms up to his face and said, “Now I am avenged! Now I am avenged! I am the little girl whose hands you cut off because you hated my father, but I love you, and pray you to give your heart to God and be saved,” and there was a burning coal entered that man’s conscience and soul that won him to the little girl’s Savior.

We are told by the German Missionary Society in Southern Africa that there was a young Black slave there one time, who became so interested in God’s Word that every evening he begged of his master that he might go and hear these missionaries. The master, himself a heathen, said “No, I want you to remain here; you are my slave and you dare not go,” but the little boy had already learned that we must obey God rather than man, and when his day’s work was done he started off, went to the missionary and heard the glorious news of Christ and Him crucified. The master, when the boy came home, said “I will put an end to this thing of going to those missionaries.” He had him tied to a post, gave to one of the other servants a lash and said, “Now lash him twenty-five times, as hard as you can strike, across his bared back.” The lash cut the wounds across his back, and after the twenty-fifth lash was given, the master said, “Now, I want to ask you, what can Jesus do for you?” The little slave looked up into his master’s face and said, “He can help me to bear these burdens.” “Give him twenty-five more!” and the lashes cut across the bleeding furrows twenty-five times more. “Now,” said the master, “what can Jesus do for you?” “He can help me to reach a home where there is no sorrow and no pain.” “Give him twenty-five more!” One after the other the twenty-five lashes cut across his bleeding back until he slowly sank down and when the last lash was given

he fell exhausted and dying upon the ground; the master, with revenge in his heart, walked up to him and said, "Now, what can Jesus do for you?" The little slave looked up and said distinctly and clearly with his dying voice, "My Savior can still help me to pray for my master!" Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the message of the morning, and we pray Thee, O God, that Thou wilt help us to live in Christ and to carry on the conflict in Him with Satan and the world and our own fleshly desires. O Father in heaven, do Thou help us to realize more and more the difference between simply religion and true Christianity. Help us to understand the difference between having our names on the church record and on the Book of Life. Help us to understand the difference between being stumbling blocks in the way of others, and being true servants of God. O Father in heaven, if Thy servant by thought, or by word, or by deed, has ever wronged any one on earth, he prays Thee now for forgiveness; and O God, he prays Thee in this hour to give us all the spirit of forgiveness and of kindness, and of love unfeigned, for such a love as Jesus Christ would have for His enemies. O God, do Thou help that the message of the morning will prepare us the better for the lives that we have to live in this sinful world, and give us a glorious victory in Jesus Christ. All these favors we ask in the name of the blessed Master, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

13. A Double Debt. *Fourth Sunday After Epiphany.*

Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness. Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. 13:8-10.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Dear Christian Friends:

OUR DEBT TO GOD IS SO GREAT that we never can pay it. In Matt. 18:23-35 we read of that great king who demanded an account to be given by his steward, and we remember that the steward owed him ten thousand talents, and, being unable to pay the vast amount, the great king simply forgave the debt; and afterwards we find that this same steward went out and choked his fellow servant because he owed him a little sum of money, and threw him into prison; then you will remember his own friends reported him to the king who had forgiven him, and he himself had to be thrown into prison until he could pay the last dollar – a thing he could never do. In other words, in that parable we have the forgiving spirit of our Lord and Master, who is willing to forgive us all our sins, but at the same time puts us under the obligation to our fellow men, showing us also that it is impossible that we should ever be able to pay the debt we owe Him.

Do not imagine you can ever pay the debt that you owe your God. Even though He forgives your sins, you are still under obligations to Him, and you are still under obligations to your fellowmen. That debt which Jesus Christ paid for us was an enormous debt. It is said that one soul is worth more than all the world; every soul lost is more than a world lost. Just think

of the value of the souls that are in this church this morning! Where is the king on earth that can pay the price for your souls and mine? Jesus Christ on Calvary not only paid that debt for your soul and mine, but paid the debt of all the souls that ever were or ever shall be. Ye are bought with a price, says the apostle, and no man has ever yet been able to tell us what that price is. It is true, we are told that Christ purchased us with His blood, but where is the living person on earth that knows the value of the blood of the Son of God? Having paid such an enormous debt for us, as I said a moment ago, we are put under obligations to our God and to our fellowmen. The text of the evening is the second table of the law and not the first, showing us especially that we have a double debt. I call your attention briefly then this evening to the theme:

A Double Debt

- I. Debts you must not owe.
- II. Debts you must let grow.

There are two kinds of debts: There are some debts which we must not owe as Christians; and then there are other debts which, as Christians, we ought to let grow. Both of these debts are hinted at in the first verse of our text: "Owe no man anything but to love one another." In these first few words, "Owe no man anything," we have the principle laid down, debts you must not owe.

I. Debts We Should Not Owe

There are a great many debts in this world we should not owe, but let me call your attention to seven debts that we must not owe, and to seven which we should let grow. The seven debts which we ought not to owe, are:

1. The one that is larger than your deed

Every man is supposed in this world to own his own home, to have a little possession. There is no excuse under heaven for any man being so poor that he cannot own a foot of ground. At the rate of fifty dollars per acre, one

stogie worth a cent will buy eight square feet of ground. Is there any man on earth so poor that he can never spend one cent? Every man who smokes a one cent cigar smokes up forty square feet of good ground, four and a half thousand miles deep. Every man that drinks ten cents' worth of whiskey a day for fifty years drinks up over \$11,660.00 of a bank account. When the Lord said in His Word, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, He took it for granted the neighbor was to own a house, and, as I have said before, I have no patience with that kind of poverty that runs around all through life and says, I never could own a foot of ground. Poor as I am, if you will come to me I will give you enough to buy forty square feet of ground before tomorrow evening. The great trouble with some people is that they do not know how to make money grow; they do not know that God ever intended for them that they should have a home of their own, and when they do get a home of their own, they are not careful to keep the debt smaller than the warranty deed.

There is nothing wrong in young people going into debt, but let us be careful that we understand exactly what a debt is. If I buy your home for four thousand dollars and pay down one thousand, with the understanding that I keep the interest paid up, and pay you five hundred dollars a year until that home is paid for, as soon as I make my first payment, I do not owe you one cent until the next interest is due. A debt is not that which I am obligated to pay at some future time, but a debt is what I owe you or my God today, and just as long as you keep your obligations to your fellowmen smaller than your deed, you can pay your debt, and just as soon as you make your debt larger than your deed, you are owing a debt that you cannot pay, and you are dishonest before the world. And so my first advice to you, on the basis of my text this evening is, owe no man a larger debt than your security.

2. At The Court House

In the second place I would say, *owe no man anything down at the court house.*

This text is taken out of that same chapter where the Apostle Paul exhorts the Romans to be subject to the higher powers, telling them to pay tribute unto whom tribute is due, and custom to whom custom is due. Some of the Romans began to think that when they became Christians they need

not be subject to Rome or to the government any more. The Apostle Paul wanted them to understand that a good citizen is a man who is obedient to the laws of his country; that a good citizen will pay his taxes, as well as his contribution for the extension of God's kingdom. God said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." I say if a man is a true child of God he will no more think of trying to hold money without paying taxes, or trying to escape his obligations to the government, than he would try to escape a duty toward his God, for the government is of God. Pray tell me, how shall our bridges be built and how shall our roads be improved, and how shall our schools be supported, if we are not loyal citizens and pay every dollar of taxes we owe?

3. At the Store

Not only should we pay all the debts we owe at the court house, *we should pay all we owe down at the store.*

How many people there are who will walk into a store and buy just as long as they are trusted, thinking they will pay at some future time, and it is that very principle that has made many people dishonest. It would be a great accommodation to the poor as well as to the rich if no merchant would sell a single yard of dry goods unless the cash is laid on the counter. It is no accommodation to me to sell my family goods that are not paid for until they are worn out, and if I cannot pay for one dress or one suit of clothing this year, how can I pay for two suits next year? If I cannot pay for the table upon which we eat, had we not better get a few boards and lay them across a barrel, and eat our meals from that, asking God's blessing upon a table that is paid for, instead of a debt that we cannot pay? In other words, the most of people are poor and will always remain poor because they are not afraid to make debts in the stores, and store debts are a detriment to all people.

4. The Meat Shop and Grocery Store

What I say with regard to store debts in general, I would especially say with regard to those two places which are frequented the most by all people in order to live, – I mean *the meat shop and the grocery store.*

We think we must have good steak to eat; we must have good meat on the table. Nevertheless, this has been discovered by a great many people, that we are not necessarily carnivorous animals, that we need not have these things if we cannot pay for them. It is far better to be honest with a dry crust of bread on the table than to run bills which we are not certain we can pay in the future. And this is especially true of the grocery store. Think of the men who are starting in the grocery business, and breaking up, for no other reason than because they have fed family after family and never received their pay, and if there is one bill that is hard to pay, it is an old account.

5. To The Church

I go further and say *we should not owe anything to the church.*

The church of God, as well as every family, needs money. It took money in the very beginning of the world, to build the first altar; it took money to get the first skin of the animals with which God could clothe the people. I do not say it took gold or silver, but it took the value of an animal, and it took labor, and the labor and the value of the thing salable is money. It takes money to build churches; it takes money to make fires to keep you warm when you are in church; it takes money to buy hymn books; it takes money to have a man live in your midst who is to give his entire service to the extension of God's kingdom.

It takes no long exhortation to show intelligent people that if it takes money for a little family of three or five, it certainly takes more money for a great family of fifteen hundred or two thousand. The question arises, do we pay our debts to the church as we should? God not only said, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, but to God the things that are God's. In our own local church we are approaching the beginning of a new financial church year, beginning on the first of April, and we know that in the coming year it will require \$1,661.00 for this congregation to pay its obligation to the different benevolences of our church, or an average of \$1.33 per communicant.

It not only takes money for benevolence at large, but it takes money for our own current expenses. The question arises, what are we doing? A few people are doing more than they should, some are hardly doing what they should, and some are doing nothing. As I said a moment ago with regard to the home, so I say with regard to the church. I do not believe there is a

Christian under God's heaven that ever felt so poor that he or she felt satisfied not to give one cent for the extension of God's kingdom. I know the world is full of poverty, and I believe that I understand that as well as the average man does, but, on the other hand, I do know that the poorest Christians I have ever met have been those that said, I cannot be satisfied unless I do something for my Savior who laid down His life for me. I know of one very poor woman, who was so poor that she could not rent a room on the lower floor, nor on the second, nor on the third, but had her little room up in the attic, and made her living with her needle, not only supporting herself but because she loved her Savior, sent six young men out into the mission field, and supported them, so that she might, through them, preach the Gospel with the end of a needle. Why did she do this? Because some one asked her? No. Because she loved her Savior; because she felt that if He were willing to die on Calvary for her, she was willing to live in an attic and send at least six messengers out into the world to preach the Gospel of Christ. That woman was Sarah Hosmer. Let me urge upon you all, then, not to have church debts.

6. Fraternal Insurance

I am glad that people are getting their eyes opened *on fraternal insurance*.

About 1700 have gone bankrupt. Young men join a lodge for cheap insurance and when they are old their money and protection are gone. If you want insurance at all, buy any old line insurance and pay for it.

7. The Saloon

I even go a step further, and this may surprise some of you, I say *if you owe a debt at the saloon, go and pay it*.

About three years ago I was appointed administrator of a large estate. One of the bills that came in was 1184.00 of a saloon bill; the heirs said to the administrator, "You must not pay that, it is a saloon bill." The administrator said, "Did the man drink the beer and the whisky?" "Yes," "Then in the name of common sense why not pay for it?" If the law were to say that you could buy a horse and not pay for it, would you keep the horse and not pay the bill? Where did God ever say that you can go into a saloon and buy a hundred dollars worth of whisky and beer and then beat the man

out of that money? Many people seem to think yet that if the law says we may sin, we may go and sin and it is all right. Pay what you owe. Owe no man anything, saloon-keeper or no saloon-keeper; grocery keeper or no grocery keeper; owe no man anything, is the command that comes from God to every one of us. I know it is a hard bill to pay. Just during the past week I discovered one professed Christian in Mansfield who never walked home at night without stopping in a certain saloon not very far from here, and I discovered his bill in that saloon alone every year is \$84.00 – over 70 glasses of whisky a month – 70 glasses of whisky going down the throat of a man that stands at communion and partakes of Christ in the Holy Supper – 70 glasses of whisky a month to burn the lining out of his stomach, to saturate his body with poison, so that when he becomes sick no doctor can help him – 70 glasses of whisky a month to saturate his brain, so that if you were to take it out of his head and set a match to it, it would burn – 70 glasses of whisky a month, not only to kindle a fire in his body, but to emphasize this great truth on the Judgment Day, that no drunkard shall enter the kingdom of heaven. It is a terrible thing, but, my friend, pay the bill; you have no right to rob a man even of fire and not pay the bill.

Owe no man anything, and I would say to every one in this house tonight, stop robbing your own soul; stop robbing your own body of its health; stop robbing your wife of your earnings; stop robbing your children of their bread; stop robbing the church of her glory; I would say this very evening, stop robbing heaven of your soul and body. If you owe one dollar to any saloon in this country, go tomorrow and pay the bill, and forever afterwards stop making those bills. If there is any one thing clearly set forth in God's Word, it is this, that no drunkard shall enter the kingdom of heaven.

A drunkard is not simply a man who must be hauled home in a cab; not simply a man that can hardly walk from being drunk. The moment that I have enough of any strong drink in me not to be totally myself, I am drunk, and a drunkard shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. What right have I to take God's gold, God's money and purchase that which will be the means of my soul's damnation. Mark well, I do not call whisky damnation; I do not call beer damnation. There is not a word said in this Bible from beginning to end that would intimate the least that there is any damnation in anything on earth, except in man and in the devil and the bad angels. Whisky is made of grain, and grain is used to make bread; the one is just as good as the

other in its place. Steel will make instruments of use and instruments of danger. Do not lay the blame anywhere else than where it belongs – it is on man. Man is by nature bad; he is thoroughly bad; he is going wrong just as sure as he is not on the side of God and righteousness. There must be a new creation take place in our hearts. Unless we are born again we cannot see the kingdom of heaven. May God help us all this evening to owe no man anything, and at the same time to owe him everything.

II. Debts We Must Let Grow

There are, in the second place, *debts that we must let grow*.

“Owe no man anything but to love one another.”

There is the debt that you do not need to pay off; let it grow. Here we see in what manner the Apostle Paul wants that to grow: “For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this. Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” Love is the debt you want to let grow. Oh, may God help it to grow in our hearts tonight toward all our fellowmen.

It is not hard to see that the Apostle Paul is quoting largely here from the second table of the law, and not only largely, but comprehensively, for he says it is briefly comprehended in this saying. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. When God gave the law to Moses, He wrote that law with His own finger; it is the only part of the Bible that God wrote with His own finger, and with that finger of His, He wrote, Love your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength, and your neighbor as yourself.

1. Love to Parents

This second table of the law demands that *we should let our love to our parents grow*.

It is the common complaint today, not only in secular papers, but also in religious journals, that love and respect for parents and old age is growing

colder and colder. It does seem to me that our youth have not got that respect and that love for father and mother, and for aged people, that the youth once had; it seems to me we are living in a very, very dangerous time when children are called smart for saying ugly things about their superiors. If there is any one thing we all ought to pray for; if there is any one thing that we ought to try to educate our youth for, it is the great love they should have for father and mother. Let us not forget that the very first words God wrote on the second table of the law, with His own finger, were, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." I cannot help seeing as I look back into my own family that my duty to my father and mother has always been to my conscience exactly as I saw them treat my grandfather. Every youth must see that. Just as your father and mother treated your grandfather and grandmother, you will try your best to treat them. If your own father and mother mistreated your grandparents, you will not try to improve very much over your parents. On the other hand, when they do all they possibly can for old age and for those that were placed over them, it is just as natural as it is for the water to fall from the clouds to the earth, that you follow in their footsteps. Let us have that debt grow. Oh, feel your responsibility today, dear father, and dear mother, as you never did before, and pray God that this debt may grow.

2. Love To Those Who Are Suffering

To This love not only should grow with regard to our parents, but *with regard to the suffering*.

"Thou shalt not kill."

How many people there are all around us, some of them sick, some of them suffering; what are we doing to alleviate their pain; what are we doing to make their lives more happy; what are we doing to try to get God to deliver them in His own good way? Let us not forget that he that hateth his brother is a murderer, and that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Ask yourself the question this morning, what is my relation to my parents, to my brothers, to my sisters, to my nearest neighbors? How are we living in the neighborhood where we abide? What is my relation to my fellowmen, to my teacher, to my superintendent, to my pastor? Do we love each other as God asks us to love each other? What is our relation especially to our

worst enemy? Are we wishing our enemies out of the way, or do we wish they were here? How often do we hear intimations of joy at the death of an enemy, or the removal of one. Oh, if I have the love of God in my heart, and my love to my fellow man is what it ought to be, if it has not been diminishing, but growing, I will regret to see my worst enemy move out of the house next door to me. If we have not got the love to our fellowmen that we ought to have, for their health and for their eternal good, let us pray that this debt may grow.

3. Social Purity

How about *social purity*?

It does seem to me that right on that point hinges many a question of the present day. The question is often asked, is it wrong to dance? I do not believe that one person out of ten thousand actually believes the act itself of dancing is wrong; I do not think one minister in ten thousand believes it, but what we do mean we generally call dance, when we do not mean dance at all. Do you suppose those four hundred and fifty people last Friday night who went to a certain place to dance, went simply because they loved to dance? I will promise to make a room warm and keep up the fires until three o'clock in the morning tomorrow night, for any one of those persons to come at ten and dance until three in the morning just for dancing's sake. Not one will come. It is not that that we mean. Why do we not say just what we mean?

The real truth is this, that what the people love is to obey lust, and there are thousands of people hiding lust behind the dance, and sometimes the wrong is not done while dancing, but before and afterwards, and that period is only used for preparation for what follows. There are homes right in this city that have been ruined, totally ruined two weeks after the dance, by men that were called the gentlemen of the dance. It was not the dancing that was wrong. The real wrong of our country today is social impurity, hidden behind progressive euchre parties, hidden behind many a game that is called innocent, hidden behind the courtships of young people, who are too young to be away from home, hidden behind thousands of things that are all right in themselves and all wrong according to their application.

What we ought to aim for in the present day is a strict demand for social purity. In every home the cords should be drawn closer around our children

that are in the hands of ungodly young men that are not safe in any community. I know there is an age when girls think the preacher does not know what he is talking about, when young men think, we know how to control ourselves, but we as pastors know some things that other people do not know, and we know what it means for a young girl's life to be ruined, and we know more of these ruined homes than you think of, and my plea tonight to all in this congregation is to pray and work for the support of social purity in every home, and in every city, and let that love grow.

4. "Thou Shalt not steal."

The love for strict honesty should grow. When that young man ran down the street with his loaf of bread, having stolen it, saying to Dr. Luther, "We must live," you remember the reply was, "Take that loaf back; you must die!" There are some people in the present day who think it does not make any difference if they get a dollar here or there in an unrighteous way, because they must live. Do not forget He who wrote with His Own finger, "Thou shalt not steal," is the One before whom we will stand on the Judgment Day, and let us not forget that before Him we will close our eyes in death, and the question for us to answer in every family is, are we honest? The child who steals a slate pencil ought to be made to take it back and apologize. The young man who rode with me on the train through Joliet, Ill., pointed to the institution and said, "I spent seven years there, and I began by stealing a two-cent stamp in a store in Chicago." If that young man had put his two-cent stamp back instead of keeping it, he would have been an honest man.

The thing for us to do is to insist upon every child that steals anything, having one hard whipping. I know in this day of what the Germans call "monkey love," there are a great many people who think it is unkind to even touch a child with a rod. If there is anything in this world that is unkind, it is the abuse of children, but understand, it is a great deal better to take a little cord and once in a child's life let it know what honesty means, than in after life have a bigger rope break the neck of that boy. Understand that it is far better to take a child when he shows he is stubborn, and break his stubborn will when he is little, than to have him grow up and die in the electric chair. There is a time coming in every man's life, old or young, when he must have his stubborn will broken, and the sooner a child learns

that, the better for his immortal soul. I can take the little twig and bend it easily, and make it grow as I want it, but when that tree gets large, before it will bend it will break; and just so it is with humanity. Let us learn this morning to love strict honesty, and pray that it may grow.

5. Truth

The same is true with regard to *truth*.

“Thou shalt not bear false witness.”

Oh, how many little lies are laughed at as if they amounted to nothing! You cannot afford to let your child tell one lie and laugh at it; you cannot afford to let that child believe it is smart to tell a thing that is not true. It was only one little lie that damned the whole world, and when you stop to think that every pain and every ache and every death in all the world has been caused by what the world today would call a little white lie, what are your black lies going to do for the world in the future? Let us hate the untruth as we hate the devil, remembering that he is the father of it. Love the truth, and let that love for truth grow.

6. Your Neighbors' Homes

Yes, I would say, love the beautiful homes of your fellowmen.

How many wives, when they visit a neighbor's home and find something they have not got, find a more beautiful home than their own, will come home dissatisfied, and grumble and murmur, and then they wonder why their husbands do not stay at home. Why, my dear friends, if I had a wife like some people have wives, I would not try to stay at home. If there is anything in the world that will drive a man from home, it is the constant murmuring and grumbling because we have not got things like some one else. In these days of high prices, the question arises in my mind every day, how do men provide for their families? My own income is not the smallest, yet I know that I haven't one dollar a year to spend on myself foolishly, and when, with all the economy I can practice, I cannot possibly get one cent ahead, I ask myself the question, how do men, who sometimes are out of work several days in the week, provide for their families? And if, when they come home, after doing their very best, they can hear nothing but grumbling and murmuring, and dissatisfaction, I say, what are you doing

with your husbands but driving them to the gambling den, driving them out to lodges, and away from home, instead of having them at home, where they ought to be? When we are told to have love in our hearts for the prosperity of other peoples' homes, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house," thank the Lord if your neighbor has a better piano than you have; thank the Lord if he has a better home than you have; thank the Lord if he is prospering, and let that love grow.

7. Your Neighbors' Prosperity

Not only should we have this love for his home, but *for his prosperity in general*.

The Lord God made a difference between the ninth and the tenth commandments. In the ninth He said, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; in the tenth He referred not to things immovable, but to things that are movable; not to things that have no life, but to things that have life; not to things to which you must go, but to things you can coax after you, and therefore He said, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maid-servant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbor's. In other words, if your neighbor has anything in the world that can walk, and can follow you, and you would be glad to have it, Oh, tell those things to stay at home, cattle or whatever it may be, and rejoice in his prosperity, and do not love to covet the things movable. In other words, let us have love in our hearts to our fellowmen, and love them as ourselves, and then we will find that this love will grow, and keep on growing as long as we live.

One thing never can grow, and that is the thing that has reached perfection. You cannot imagine for a moment that God can grow any more. God is perfect. Did you ever stop to think that we are so imperfect that as long as we live there is always room to grow? You can love God more today than you ever did before. Can you not love your fellowmen better today than you ever did before? Let that love grow, and let that love be a debt that shall keep on growing as long as you live.

Conclusion

In conclusion, let me give you three thoughts to take home with you:

1. God is love.

There is no more beautiful definition in your Bible than simply that God is love. Could it be otherwise than that the law and the Gospel should be love?

2. Love To Man

The first table of the law is love to God; the second table is love to man.

How could God, who is love, take a pen and write the law without the ink of love? How could God, who is love, pour out His heart into the law without pouring love into that law?

3. God Loves Sinners

And how could God, who is love, give to you a Son that was love, and how could that Son, who died on Calvary for your sins, proclaim a Gospel that was not a *Gospel of love*? And the Gospel of love is this, that He hates sin, but loves the sinner.

As you are sitting before me this evening I am sure you feel, at least to a degree, what my own soul feels. Oh, how we have sinned against our God! Our sins are not loved by our God, my friends. How can a God of love, love sin, which is the transgression of the law? But do not fail to remember that He who hates our sins loves the sinner. Do not forget that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Christ has given His life for you and for me, and comes to us this morning and says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." I do believe; do you? I am baptized; are you? "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Oh God, what can I do for Thee? Thou hast done so much for me.

Help us all to pay the debts we owe to our fellowmen, and then to let the debt of love grow. This is our prayer, and may God bless this service to our eternal good. Amen.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, give Thy rich blessing to the service of the evening. We thank Thee that Thou hast watched over us throughout this hour. We thank Thee that Thou hast given Thy servant strength for the hour, and we pray Thee, O God, that this message may be sanctified with power from on high. Oh, Thou knowest our weaknesses and frailties, and Thou knowest that without Thy grace we could not be sustained a single day. Thou knowest the battles that are being fought in human breasts. O heavenly Father, do Thou help this morning that we may look around us and pay every dollar of debt that we owe to our fellowmen in the form of money debts, and the debt of love, may it grow larger and larger toward our fellowmen. We ask Thee especially to forgive us for any sins that we have ever committed against our parents or neighbors. We ask Thee to help the world to become socially more pure day by day. We pray Thee, heavenly Father that Thou wilt help us to have a great desire to be honest in Thy sight, to love truth and to despise lies. We pray Thee that Thou wilt give us real love toward our fellowmen and their prosperity in the home and outside of the home, and in order that we may drink more deeply of this great fountain, hold before us Thy love, Thy love in essence, Thy love in Thy law, Thy love in Thy Gospel, and now may that love surround us and press us to Thy heart, while we sing the prayer that Thou hast taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

14. A Stranger in the Sanctuary.

Fifth Sunday After Epiphany.

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him. Col. 3:12-17.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

I BELIEVE IT WAS CARLYLE who said there were so many millions in England – mostly fools. It is no strange assertion. Great thinkers have always declared that men are very scarce, even in the midst of the multitude. You have often heard that story of God himself, in the city of Jerusalem, sending out men and saying, “Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man.” Jer. 5:1. In that large city of Jerusalem God himself was sending messengers to find a man. That sounds a good deal like the story of Diogenes, who used to walk on the streets of Athens with a lantern at noon; when stopped or asked what he was looking for, he replied that he was hunting a good man. Herodotus said, in that familiar language of the day, “*Homines permulti, viri perpauci,*” or, in our own language, “Human beings very many; men very few.” At one time a cynic was sent out to call good men to appear before the Roman censor. This man walked out to the graveyard, stood on a new grave and said, “Get up, you dead.” Some people wanted to know what

he meant. “Why,” he said, “I am sent out to find good men and they are all under the ground.”

The lesson of the evening pictures to us a new man, a stranger in the sanctuary. It is no trouble in these days to find congregations, no trouble to find multitudes in the church when the weather is nice, but the question that presents itself to every man of God is this, who are Christians? and the more we compare the average man with the demands of God’s Holy Word, the more we are led to believe that there are church members many. Christians few. “Many are called,” says God, “but few are chosen.”

A Stranger In The Sanctuary

Can you help me find him tonight? Let me describe him:

I. He Is A Very Highly Favored Man

The Lord says of him that he is elect of God, holy and beloved. Sometimes we feel our own sins until we are almost compelled to cry out, with Paul, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me? But let us not forget that if we are true children of God, if we have been called by His Gospel, enlightened by His gift, if we have repented of our sins and believe on Christ, and have had our sins washed away with the blood of the Lamb, and have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and entered into the covenant of God, and have made up our minds to be faithful to Him until death: remember God says of us, we are elect. It is a great blessing and an honor to be elected as the best friend even of a ruler of a country like our own; it is an honor to be elected to the cabinet of our own president, but, my friends, when the King of kings and Lord of lords elects a man, it is a double honor, the highest that man can receive in this world. This stranger in the sanctuary is an elect man.

He is not only elect, but he is also holy. “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved.” Not that we are holy in ourselves, nor that this man never sinned, not that this man is so perfect now he can not sin, but he has a holy Redeemer; he has accepted the holy righteousness of his Savior; he has the Holy Spirit within him; he is cleansed of his sin and is walking in the way of his Master, and, having Jesus Christ by faith, God says this, my

stranger in the sanctuary is holy, and just because he is elect and holy, God calls him His beloved.

It is a great thing to be loved by the Lord our God as His child. God loves even His enemies; He loves the whole world. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." There is therefore no man on earth who can say God does not love me, and there will be no man in hell who can say, God did not love me; but when we, loved of God, accept Him as our Savior, become His children in the covenant of holy baptism, are faithful to Him until death, we are not only loved, but we are His beloved children; so is the stranger in the sanctuary.

II. He Wears A Good Warm Suit

We are hunting tonight for this stranger in the sanctuary. What kind of clothing does he wear? He wears the garment of Christ's righteousness, and Christ's Spirit, and Christ's love. The very fact that he is elect of God shows that he is justified by faith, and, when he is justified by faith, the righteousness of Jesus Christ becomes his righteousness. Understand what justification by faith is. When I, as a poor sinner, look at the cross of Calvary and see my Savior bleeding and dying, and acknowledge that He is bleeding and dying for me, a poor, lost, condemned sinner, accept Him then as my substitute, as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, then the Father in heaven, on account of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, declares me justified, not on account of anything I have done or merited, but alone out of pure mercy. When I, therefore, accept the righteousness of Jesus Christ, I am elect, and that is the dress that this stranger in the sanctuary wears, the righteousness of his own Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

He wears not only His righteousness, but he wears also the very spirit of Christ. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." In other words, this most beautiful garment is the dress of the stranger in the sanctuary. Too many people who call themselves Christians are none. Ask

yourself the question tonight, as I read, whether you are wearing these garments. “Bowels of mercies” – an Hebrew expression which in our language would mean full of mercy, a heart of mercy. Do you always have mercy on your fellowmen as Christ did? Are you wearing His spirit? “Kindness” – Are you watching out for opportunities to do some one a kind act? Are you always looking for opportunities to lend a helping hand to all who are in need? This garment is worn by the stranger in the sanctuary. “Humbleness of mind” – Jesus Christ was humble; He loved to be the servant even of poor sinners; He loved to go and wash their feet, in order to show them how to serve their fellowmen. He was so humble that He slept, not in a grave of His own, but in the borrowed grave of Joseph of Arimathaea. Have you the spirit of that Christ that slept in a borrowed grave? Are you humble enough to say to your fellowmen, take the highest seat and let me sit down lower? Are you worrying because some one has a higher position? If so, you have not got the garment worn by the stranger in the sanctuary.

“Meekness, long suffering;”

The Lord our Savior is gentle and meek and God wants us to come to Him. Have you got the meekness of the Master? Oh, what patience God has with us. Some of us have not been serving God as we should. Some of you may have been walking in the paths of Satan all your lives; some of you may have been invited time and again by your Lord and Master to come into His service, to give your hearts to Him, but you have gone on in the path of destruction further and further, and the wonder is, even to us poor sinners, that God has not struck you dead long ago. The question in our minds is, how can He have such patience? How can He let the sun shine upon the evil as well as upon the good? How can He let you sleep and rest day after day, night after night, and treat you as if you were the very best of His children, when He knows you are His enemy? Oh, the long-suffering of Jesus Christ. And now, my friends, when we are the stranger in the sanctuary, the new man spoken of in this chapter, we have the spirit of that long-suffering. And when people will not do as we want them to do, this week, or this year, we will wait another month or another year, and say, God may yet have mercy upon him. Such, my friends, is the dress of the man who is a stranger in the sanctuary.

“Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”

The unforgiving spirit of the professed Christian is seen on all hands. There are some professed Christians who live almost in the same yard, who never speak to each other; there are professed Christians in the same church who never shake hands; who never take a step toward their fellowmen; who never care to know any one outside of their little circle. I am not referring to any special persons, but the spirit of charity, love and forgiveness as found in Jesus Christ is found in so few people, even in the Christian church, that the man who has the spirit of Christ is a stranger even in the sanctuary.

We might call these garments internal, or under-garments, but there is another garment which this stranger wears over all the rest. “And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” A man may have ever so beautiful a coat, but if he has no buttons and no way to fasten it, it is not complete. The apostle Paul pictures this stranger in the sanctuary, this new man, as having a garment drawn around the garment of election, and the garment of the spirit of Christ, as the garment of love, and even as one would take a girdle and tie it around his garments that they may all fit, or as he may take the buttons or the hooks and fasten the garments just as they should be, so says this apostle, this stranger in the sanctuary is a man who has dwelt so close to Christ, as John did when he laid his head on the Master’s breast, that he has drunk in the love of Calvary until he is so filled with it that he must go out, and Christ like, try to offer himself for the good people of the world. Have you got that garment on tonight? Do you know the stranger in the sanctuary who is wearing these three garments as a child of God, the new man, should?

III. This Stranger In The Sanctuary Has A Good Sound Heart

“With grace in your heart to the Lord,” says the apostle. Not only has he got grace in the heart, he has peace in the heart. “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts.” Not only has he peace in the heart, but he has gratitude there as well. “And be ye thankful, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.”

So I say this stranger in the sanctuary is not one who has the heart disease; he has in his heart first of all the grace of God. If there is any one thing we all need in our hearts, it is an abundance of the grace of God, and to have His grace we should make good use of the means of grace. The Word of God and the Holy Sacraments are the channels through which the Holy Spirit operates on man; they are the channels through which He conveys His grace to us, and if, therefore, we desire to have good sound hearts, we must hear God's Word; we must think of our baptismal covenant prayerfully every day, and as Jesus went down, not into the river Jordan, but into His grave, and arose again from the dead, so we should daily walk in newness of life. As Paul says in Rom. 6:4: "We are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." The question arises tonight, are you making good use of the means of grace? Are you hearing God's Word? Are you going to the Lord's Supper as you should, and are you getting Jesus Christ Himself in that supper, as He Himself promised? Have you got the grace of God in your heart? If not, you are not the stranger in the sanctuary who is here described as the new man.

And not only grace, but peace we must have in our hearts. "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts." Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace, and this the angels in heaven knew when they sang at His birth, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men." That little Savior that slept in the crib of Bethlehem was Peace from heaven, the Prince of Peace. Before He came into the world all nations were at war with each other, and all people were at war with their God, but when the Prince of Peace came. He made peace between man and man, and God and man, and He made peace between nations which were truly Christian. Do not misunderstand me; the Prince of Peace never declared that war dare not go on in this world; He never said that ungodly men should become saints unless they became Christians. Let us not think for a single moment that the Lord Jesus Christ will allow Satan so to sleep that children of the devil can really be children of God without being born again. When men have not got the peace of God in their hearts they want war and they are going to have war, and they are going to demonstrate to the world that they are murderers, as they are, whether they carry the sword or not. He that is an enemy against God must be an enemy against his fellowmen, but remember, the moment we accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, the moment we make peace

with God, we want peace with our fellowmen, and this stranger in the sanctuary has the grace of God in his heart, he has peace with God, and he wants peace with all his fellowmen.

He not only has peace in his heart, but he becomes thankful. I tell you the more a man realizes what God has done for him, what He did for him on Calvary's hill, the more thankful he becomes. A man is really an unthankful wretch who can enjoy all the blessings God is continually showering down upon him and never say, I thank Thee, O, my God. Oh, let the sound heart be filled with thankfulness! Let the sound heart realize that God is King, and that He knows what He is doing, and no difference what befalls us, if we have love to God, all things work together for good to them that love God. Any heathen can thank God for gold and for good health; it takes a child of God, a Christian, to thank God for the loss of gold, and loss of health, for death. The thing for us to do, if we are the stranger in God's sanctuary, being the new man, is to say, my God, I thank Thee for the beautiful evening, though it is thundering and lightning. Thank God for the beautiful weather though the cyclone sweeps over the city; thank God for all things being done by the hand of the Almighty.

IV. He Is A Great Student Of God's Word

This stranger not only has a sound heart, but he is a great student of God's Word.

“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms.”

From these words and others that I might quote in this lesson, we find that this new man, this stranger in the sanctuary, is one who loves to have the Word of Christ or the Word of God dwell richly in his heart. This new man never stays out of the Church of God unless he is sick and cannot reach the temple; you always find him in God's house; this new man wants to hear the exposition of every Bible text; he wants to learn something more of the great deep of God's Holy Word, and just as one who is accustomed to sitting at a good table and eating from the hands of a good cook, is not satisfied with anything that is poorly prepared, just so this new man wants

the very best that he can get out of God's holy Word, and he never is satisfied; the more he eats of this great truth the more he wants, and the more he eats the healthier he gets, and the healthier he gets, the more he wants of this great truth, so that he actually hungers for the Word of God in the Divine service.

He not only hungers for this Word in the Divine service, but he has this Word in his home. This new man, this stranger in the sanctuary, has family worship, reads the Word of God daily in his home, the Word dwells in him; it not only comes to him once a week, or once a month, but it so dwells in him that every day he wants to know more of God's Word. This stranger therefore, does not sit down at the table and eat without prayer; he does not go home day after day and never see the Bible; he does not rear his family like a set of heathen; he wants his Bible on the altar just the same as he wants his bread on the table. This stranger wants his family fed on the Word of the eternal God; he wants to attend every conference and every meeting in his church, for the purpose of learning and teaching.

“Let the Word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another.” It seems to me the apostle Paul had in mind something like a good teacher's meeting, where they all come together, and if one man knows something the other does not, he gives that idea and that truth to the others. In other words, this stranger would not miss a teachers' meeting unless he is sick; he would be where he can learn of others, and teach. He is a great student of God's Word.

V. He Is A Great Man To Sing

“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

He does not sing for show; he does not sing for people, but he sings to get other people to sing from the heart to heaven. When he rises to sing he does not care about the position of his hands; he does not care where he stands; he does not care whether people can see him or not; there is no show about this new man. This stranger in the sanctuary has in mind that there is a God who deserves all the glory, who deserves all the praise, and therefore you find him usually with a Bible in his hand; if he has not got a Bible in his

hand he has the Psalms in his head; he has so many of the old songs of the Bible either before his eyes or in his head and in his heart that wherever he goes he is making melody to the Father in heaven, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Holy Spirit.

You find this new man coming to church with a hymnbook in his hand; you cannot hire him to sit down like a block; you cannot hire him to sit down in a church to be entertained; this new man is going to have a hymnbook if he has to sell the garment off of his back to get it; he is going to open it up to the very hymn and read it over, remembering that the hymn is a prayer, and when the congregation is singing he is going to sing along in his heart, if not with his lips; he is going to take part in that prayer; he cannot help it; he would feel like a rebel in the house of God, unless he took part in the songs as well as in the psalms. If a new hymnal is out he wants it; he will not only praise God with psalms, but with hymns – hymns of the olden times and hymns of modern times, and if a new hymn is introduced that is as good as the old, he says, let us sing the new hymn, for every day we are enjoying new blessings of our heavenly Father. If “Lead, Kindly Light,” is not in the old hymnal, let us put it into the new, and sing. If there is another hymn in the world as good as “Rock of Ages,” let us sing it. If there is a new hymn, no difference who penned it, that will give special glory to my God, I want that hymn. He is a wonderful singer; he sings as a child of God; he sings no difference whether he knows the notes or not; no difference whether he can carry the melody or not, nothing in the world can deter him from being a singer. Whenever people come into his home who can sing, he says, let us sing; when the congregation meets he says, let us have good congregational music; he is constant in singing, “Praise God from whom all blessings flow.”

In these words you have the picture of a new man, so new that you can hardly find him in the First Lutheran Church; that you can hardly find him in any church. “A man wanted,” was the cry on the streets of Jerusalem; “A man wanted,” was the cry on the streets of Athens; “A man wanted,” is the cry today in the house of God, a new man, a stranger in the sanctuary, one that has the dress on that God wants him to wear, that has the spirit that Christ had; that will sing the songs of praise that God wants him to sing; he does not confine himself to the Psalms, nor to the church hymnal; he is willing to sing any good sacred music.

“Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Spiritual songs. How foolish it is to teach our children all the nonsensical songs they are singing these days, no substance to them, nothing to them worth remembering, when the world is so full of good sacred music; so full of music that is worth singing on our dying beds. What use is there teaching our children to sing the little ditties that have neither sense nor music in them? This new man says we ought to have good songs in the public schools and in the singing schools, that our books ought to be filled with songs with Christ in them.

VI. He Is A Great Society Man

You will be a little surprised when I tell you that *this new man is a great society man*. I do not think he belongs to any secret societies, for in the 17th verse we read: “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.” In other words, this new man never goes anywhere unless he can take Jesus Christ right with him. All he thinks and says, and all that he does must have Christ in it. It is Jesus that makes his society so great. In my examination of eighteen years I have only found two secret orders that had Christ in them, and the one is hardly worth calling a secret order; the other you cannot find Christ until you get away up in the highest degree and pay at least four or five hundred dollars. You do not have to pay four or five hundred dollars to find the Christ that I worship. Then the order that has Christ in the highest degree demands of a man that he drink some wine out of a human skull, with a drawn sword, as heathen did in ancient times, but I do not believe the Christ I worship demands of any man that he get a human skull to drink wine from. So, I say, I do not believe this new man belongs to any secret order; I do not believe he is an Elk, either. You see here that he is elect, but it does not say one word about him being an Elk. Why do I mention Elk tonight? A few weeks ago, there was printed in the papers of Mansfield, Ohio, the laws on gambling, the laws against selling tickets for an automobile. I say the law against that is just as firm, just as plain and strict as the law. Thou shalt not kill. Every man in this city knows that this gambling has been going on. Day before yesterday one of our city papers came out and announced that on a certain night the drawing would take

place for the automobile. In other words, the gambling was going on. We are told that this was done by the "Best People On Earth;" my friends, in all kindness, if these are the best people on earth, God deliver us from the worst. I have nothing to say about individuals, but I do say that after yesterday morning. Dr. Meese of the Presbyterian Church, Dr. Baltzley of the St. Luke's Lutheran Church and myself, as chairman, of the committee for the good of this city, went to the mayor, showed him the law and got him to promise that he would do all he could to stop that gambling. After a man from Cleveland drew an automobile from the Elks of this city last night, in the face of the laws of Ohio, in the face of everything that is just and right, teaching our young men to gamble, carrying on a system that should not be tolerated in any civilized land, I wish publicly to declare tonight, showing that I have done my duty as a member of this committee, that surely the curse of God must rest upon such actions, and I do hope if there is any man here tonight who belongs to that order, that he will demand, as a good citizen of Ohio, that that gambling business stop in the future. I do hope, if there are any young men here tonight who are out of the clutches of these organizations that they will stay out until they come out fully and wholly on the side of God.

This new man is no Elk; this new man is a man that never goes anywhere unless he can take Jesus Christ with him. I know, as well as I know anything, that Jesus Christ would not have spent the last three nights dancing until two and three o'clock in the morning; I know He would not have carried on the meeting last night into the holy Lord's Day, as was done this morning. The time has come that the pulpit must speak against every evil, whether it is in the church or out of the church, and I have no apology to make, no apology whatever. What I say tonight is right, and every sensible man knows it, and when men who call themselves the best people on earth are going deliberately in the face of the laws of the state, are going to trample upon all laws of right, are going to break the Sabbath Day, then, I say, it is time that the people cry out against such institutions, no difference by what name they are known.

This new man when he thinks, thinks of Jesus; when he talks, he talks of things that pertain to the good of the world in time and forever; when he works, he works along by the side of the Lord Jesus Christ. "And whatever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." Why is it that some people do not understand

such sermons as I am preaching tonight? In the first place, it is because they do not want to understand them, and, on the other hand, if they would want to, it is because they are not trying to live as Christ wants us to live. When you once live as God wants you to live, when you think as God wants you to think, when you speak as God wants you to speak, when you work as God wants you to work, you have absolutely no time to waste as so many people in the world are wasting time today.

Who is this stranger in the sanctuary?

There is only one answer to the question. It is the true Christian, the new man, who has put off the old man. "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." Oh, what a beautiful man Adam must have been before he sinned! Created in the image of God, the new man puts off the old man of sin, and puts on the new man, and tries as near as possible to be like Adam before he sinned. And now may God help us all tonight to keep the laws of God, the laws of our country, and, first of all, to be a good citizen of the kingdom of our God, and then a citizen of this state, and so live that on that last great day we may find ourselves to be citizens of the kingdom of heaven. May God bless this sermon tonight to our eternal good, is my prayer. Amen.

Prayer

Our Father, we come before Thee in this evening hour asking Thee to awaken the conscience, not only of this congregation, but of all the congregations in this city and in the world; and we pray Thee, heavenly Father, do Thou waken the conscience of the people who are respected and looked up to, and yet are the means of leading others to break laws and leading them down the path of destruction, because they will not walk with Christ. We ask Thy special blessing this evening to rest upon each individual in this church. O Lord, as we go out of this temple tonight do Thou help us to go out as a stranger in the sanctuary, and yet as one who feels at home here, because he is the new man. Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew right spirits within us. Go with us throughout the coming week and throughout the balance of life. Help that we may constantly be

supplied with Thy grace in our hearts; lift us up on the plains of life into the very footprints of the Lord Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

15. Peter's Power. Sixth Sunday After Epiphany.

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation; for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 2 Pet. 1:16-21.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

I HAVE ALWAYS LOVED the character of the Apostle Peter, and one reason I have loved him possibly more than many other characters, is because I have always found my weaknesses so much like his. The Apostle Peter was one of those impetuous characters that was always plunging into things until he stirred up everybody around him, and once in a while he plunged into things he would gladly have plunged out of if he could have done so. We find so much of ourselves in the Apostle Peter that we love to study his character. There are two or three characteristics of the man that make him wonderful. One of the first is that he was always stirring up things around him. He says, in the 13th verse of this same chapter, "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance." He says in this same epistle, chapter 3:1: "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you, in both which I stir up your minds by way of remembrance." You will remember that as a disciple of Christ he was always the spokesman, and when others were quiet you could depend

upon it, Peter would be up and fight for his Master, even at the gate of Gethsemane.

Not only was he getting things stirred up around him, but we find that he had absolutely no fear of death, and always spoke in such a way as if it were the message of a dying man to dying men. He spoke of death rather pleasantly. He says here in 5:14: "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shelved me." You remember the Lord prophesied he would not die a natural death, but that he would suffer martyrdom; that never bothered Peter; he never worried anything about it; he simply looked upon his body as a house in which his soul dwelt, and he knew that when the day came for God to call his soul home, it was just like moving out of an old, rickety shanty into a great mansion, and that could not trouble him at all. Nevertheless, it made a wonderful impression on his sermons and on his writings. If you knew this was your last day on earth, you would doubtless do some things you are leaving undone; if I knew this were my last sermon, I should say some things I am leaving unsaid. The Apostle Peter, realizing that he was not to die by sickness, but by a martyr's death, never knew what moment he would be offered, and consequently always spoke and wrote as if they were the last words the world would hear from him.

That leads to another characteristic of the man, and that is that he always said and wrote those things that he need not be ashamed of after his death. He says in v. 15: "Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance." He was very close to death, no question about that, and he knew very well that when he was dead there would be trouble arising in the Church that needed correction, and he wanted to leave a message back that the people might read after he had closed his eyes in death, and, therefore, I say he was always very careful to say just such things as he wanted said long after he was dead.

My dear friends, the very text that I have tonight is the words of the Apostle Peter. Just notice how a man lives after his death if he is true to his God. I am satisfied if the Apostle Peter were living today he would have reported every sermon that he preached, and he would preach in such a way that he would not need to be ashamed of his sermons; and I claim that every minister of the Gospel should so preach that he need never be ashamed of the words he has spoken. Do you suppose that if I were ashamed of my sermons I would have them put in cold print to speak long after I am dead?

The very sermon that has created the greatest stir in this city of possibly any that I have ever preached, I have had printed in my book, and I defy any man to show me one sentence in it that is wrong; I want it to stand in cold print long after this tongue is silent. A man has no business to preach from the pulpit what he cannot back up, and when he can back it up as the truth, he ought to be willing to have it go in cold print and stand for thousands of years after his voice is silent.

We are told in the text of the evening that these things are not fables. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty." May the Holy Spirit bless us tonight while we are learning of:

Peter's Power

This power is demonstrated in two ways:

- I. He positively knew that Jesus was the Savior of the world.
- II. He positively knew that the Bible was the inspired Word of God.

And these two thoughts made Peter a power, no difference whether he wrote or preached.

I. He positively knew that Jesus was the Savior of the world

What did he know about Jesus Christ, and how did he know it? He tells us in this text of three things that he positively knew: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty." There are three words here that explain just what he knew about Jesus; he knew His power; he knew His coming; he knew His majesty, and those three things made Peter a great power.

1. He knew the power of the miracles of Christ

Peter was the man who had been fishing all night, and rowed out into the deep, and at the word of God threw out his net and drew in more fishes than they could haul in one little vessel, and there he recognized the power of Jesus Christ. He recognized His power not only in that miracle, but in many other miracles which He performed, Peter positively knew that Jesus could say to the water, "Be wine," and it was wine; he positively knew that Jesus Christ could step into the room where the little dead daughter lay, take her hand and say, "Arise," and she arose; he positively knew that Jesus Christ could go to the grave of a man that was buried four days, and say, "Lazarus, come forth," and he came forth. The Apostle Peter positively knew the power of the eye of Christ. You will remember that Peter, in his hour of weakness, denied the Master; he not only denied Him, but in that hour of weakness the old fisherman's spirit came back and he began to curse and swear in the presence of the enemies of Christ; and the Lord Jesus Christ was not very far away. He had told Peter before that before the cock crew twice he would deny Him thrice, and now Peter was carrying out that prophecy to the letter. Jesus Christ, looking down into the court, saw Peter; He did not scold him; He did not walk up and say, "Peter, didn't I tell you you would deny Me?" He did not say, "Peter, how does it come that you, My own follower, stand here and swear, and have thus disgraced Me and all My disciples?" No. The Lord Jesus Christ simply walked past Peter and looked at him, and kept on looking at him until His eyes had penetrated him and made him feel his sins. He felt the power of the eye of God, and, feeling that power, he could stand it no longer, and walked out, and buried his face in his hands, and wept bitterly. Peter knew the power of Jesus Christ; there was no question about that; there was no fable about it.

He not only knew His miraculous power, but he knew His saving power. The Apostle Peter said in that little ship, "Depart from me for I am a sinful man." He realized the fact that Jesus Christ, and a sinner and his sins could not all remain in the same little boat. Instead, however, of Jesus Christ departing and leaving Peter and his sins in the vessel. He said, You stay here, and I will stay here, and we will make the sins depart, and He saved him in that little vessel more completely and fully than he ever had been before. And then, when Peter had denied his Master, he remembered what Jesus had said, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Peter's blunder made him repent, and when he repented he turned back, and when

he turned back he was converted; and ever after that poor Peter was humble, and he remembered the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And not only the power that saved Peter, but he remembered the power that had saved the others; he remembered the power on Calvary's hill that saved that blasphemer, that malefactor, on the cross, and when he remembered all the saving power of Jesus Christ, he wanted it distinctly understood that he was not telling fables; he was telling something that he positively knew, and that is the power of Jesus Christ.

He not only knew His power, but he also knew something of the coming of Jesus Christ. He knew from the Old Testament, which was a light that shineth in a dark place, that there was a Savior to come; he knew that the Lord Jesus Christ had come; he knew that He was born in the crib of Bethlehem; he knew that he had gone down into Egypt, and from there back to Nazareth, and began His ministry after being a carpenter; he knew that the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ had come into the world, and by His miracles had demonstrated that He was the promised Messiah; he knew He had power over life and death; he positively knew, therefore, that He was the Messiah that was promised, and should come, and not only should come, but would come again. But remember, this was the same Apostle Peter who saw Jesus Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration; the same Apostle Peter who went out that day with the rest of His disciples when Jesus gave the last command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned," and, with hands uplifted, blessed them, and ascended higher and higher, past the stars and zones and whirling world systems until He went home in the presence of His Father; and when they looked around they saw two angels, who said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Peter knew that Christ was coming and that he was not telling a fable, a story, when he spoke of the coming of Jesus Christ, not only the first advent, but the second as well.

He not only knew of the coming of Christ, but he knew of His majesty. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty." Oh, the majesty of the Son of God! You will not forget, my friends, that while Jesus Christ was in the state of

humiliation, where He made no use of His divine power, that after all, He was the Son of God. Do not forget that when He was baptized, the Father from heaven said. This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Do not forget that when He was down in the garden of Gethsemane, sweating drops of blood, when Judas and the soldiers came out to arrest Him, that He did not try to run away, but walked out to the gate and said to the soldiers standing around. Whom seek ye? They said, Jesus of Nazareth. He said, I am He; and every soldier dropped to the ground. What made them fall? It was not that Jesus Christ struck them. Yes, He struck them with His majesty and they could not touch him. Peter says here, “For we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.” As you heard in the Gospel lesson for this same Sunday, he and John and James went up into a certain mountain, with Jesus Christ, apart from the world, and all at once they look, and behold, the face of Jesus Christ was like the sun. His garments were as bright as the light and lo, and behold, there stands the man that stood on Mount Sinai and received the law from God! Moses is there. And there stands the man that took his flight to heaven in a chariot of fire – Elijah! And Peter, the man that always stirred up things, said, Let us build here three tabernacles: one for Thee, O Christ; one for thee, O Moses, and one for thee, Elias, as he is called in the Septuagint; and then a brightness came over Him that struck Peter, and James and John to the ground, and a voice came down – the same voice that three years before this came down to the Jordan, and said, “This is My beloved Son; hear ye Him.” You understand that the Apostle Peter saw the majesty of Christ; it was not a story or fable.

2. On what was his knowledge based?

How did he know these things? I want to say right here that the Apostle Peter knew that Jesus Christ was the Savior of the world just as well as you and I know anything that we know in this life. Men have asked the question, How do you know that Jesus Christ is the Savior? Might not these witnesses have been mistaken? Might not the Bible be mistaken? Might not the Jews be right, who are still looking for a Savior? I say no, and everybody knows that they never will find another Savior. How do we know that? We know it this way: A record was kept in ancient times of the families of the Old Testament, and these records were deposited in the temple at Jerusalem. In those records you could trace any child that was

born, back to the days of Abraham. After Christ was born God saw to it that the temple was burned and the records destroyed, and there is no Jew on earth today would know whether any child born was a son of Abraham and a son of David, as prophesied in the Old Testament, no difference where or when he would be born. God has demonstrated the fact that the Savior has come. I say here tonight that we know just as positively that Jesus Christ is the only Savior of the world, as we know anything. How do you know there is a land of Egypt? How many of you have been there? If there is a man in this audience tonight who has ever been in Egypt, I wish he would stand up; I would like to look at him. Not one, and yet you say there is a land of Egypt. How do you know? Did you ever let the sands of Egypt run through your fingers? Did you ever see Egypt with your own eyes? Did you ever go and feel Egypt, or hear a voice there? You say you could. Possibly you could, but will you doubt there is such a place before you go to see? Every man in this audience tonight positively knows there is a land of Egypt. You positively know there was such a man as George Washington. Did you ever see him? I did not. Did you ever shake hands with him? I did not. Did you ever hear him speak? No. You never heard him; you never saw him, and yet you positively know there was a George Washington. I know just as positively that there is a Jesus Christ as I know there was a George Washington.

The Apostle Peter says. This is no fable I am telling you; I have felt and know the power of the Lord Jesus Christ; I have seen Him with my own eyes; I am not telling you some little story that I cannot verify; I have heard with my own ears. If the Apostle Peter, a man who died for the truth, cannot be trusted, how can I trust you, and how can we trust the history of the United States? The Apostle Peter is as good a witness as the world ever had, among men; he was willing to be crucified with his head down, that he might not dishonor his Master, who was crucified with His head up. Tradition tells us when his own wife was led to the martyr's pyre he said, "Remember thy Lord, O wife!" He was not only willing himself to die, but that his family should die for the truth. If we cannot believe men who die for the truth, how can we believe men who need not suffer to tell it?

He knew it not only by his own testimony; he knew it by the testimony of others who were good witnesses. He does not say here, I saw Him with my own eyes, but he says, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and the coming of our

Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.” In other words, he had in mind some other men who knew what he knew. James was a good man; he saw Christ; he felt His power; he heard the Father say, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” There never was a better man on earth than John. John was up on the mount; John had his ear against the breast of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; John had a vision that other men never had. I would take John, and Peter, and James as my witnesses against any three men that ever walked on God’s earth. If what they say is not true, whom shall we believe?

But we have not only got this testimony; we have the testimony of another great hero – Paul; he saw Christ and he fought against Christ until God struck him down and said, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” And the Lord called to Ananias and sent him to the street that is called Straight; and he said to Saul, “Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins,” and the scales fell from his eyes, and he saw as he never saw before; and from that time he went out into the world and proclaimed the same Gospel he had been fighting against, and the same Savior he had been opposing, and tried to build up the same church that he had before been trying to tear down; and I would say to every one in this house tonight, if you have been fighting against the Church of God, against the Bible, against things good and holy, you have been fighting against the Almighty God and you will come out conquered just as sure as there is a God in heaven.

The Apostle Peter refers us to a great many other witnesses when he says: “We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts.” He tells them that there are men who have been speaking for fifteen hundred years about this Savior, whose testimony they could take if they did not care to take his.

He not only had the testimony of Jesus Christ and of good men, but he had the testimony of God himself. The voice that he heard was not the voice of men, nor of angels, it was the voice of the heavenly Father that saith: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” He heard Jesus ask the question, “Who do men say that I am?” And who stood up first and said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” but this same Peter? The Apostle Peter heard Jesus proclaim that He was the Son of God; he heard the Holy Spirit proclaim it by descent on the head of the Master at His

baptism; he was the man who preached on the day of Pentecost; he was the man to demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit; he was the man who saw the fiery tongues come down upon the waiting disciples; he was the man who preached a sermon that brought three thousand souls to the Savior in one day; he was a power because he knew positively that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world.

Right there lies the power of the ministry today. When a minister will just hold up Jesus Christ as a model man there is no power in it; the truth is, when you hold up Jesus Christ as a good man and not as the Son of God, it is all nonsense. Jesus Christ was either the Son of God, or he was the biggest rascal that ever walked on earth. When a man claims to be the Son of God, and is not, he is a liar, and a liar is never a good man. If you think that Jesus Christ was not the only Savior of the world, and say that He was a good man, I am glad I was not educated in your home; I am glad that my mother and father had better morals; I have never been taught to call a liar a good man. Jesus Christ, I repeat it, was either the Son of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, or He was one of the greatest impostors that the world has ever seen. So you must take either one horn or the other of the dilemma; either acknowledge that Jesus Christ was the only Savior of the world, or put Him down as a character unworthy to be held up before our children, or in our homes. Therefore away with the idea of Christ as an example simply of a good man; it is all nonsense; He was the Son of God; we have the testimony from heaven; we have the testimony from good men, and we have the testimony of the great Apostle Peter as an eyewitness. The real power, therefore, of the ministry must lie in proclaiming, without a single doubt, that Jesus Christ is the only Savior of the world.

II. He Positively Knew That The Bible Was The Inspired Word Of God

The next step in the power of Peter lies in the fact that he recognized the Bible as the inspired Word of God. While it was a certainty in his mind that Jesus Christ was the only Savior of the world, it was no more of a certainty than that the Bible is the Word of God. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your

hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation: for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

1. A Beautiful Picture of the Scriptures

There you have as beautiful a picture of the Scriptures as you will find within the lids of this Book. The Apostle Peter plainly declares that the Holy Ghost is the author of the Bible. “But holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” Your stenographer writes as she is moved by you. When your stenographer has finished her letter, dictated by you, it is not her letter; it is yours. Now, says the Apostle Peter, just so we are not authors of what we write. “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” The Holy Ghost is, therefore, the author of the Bible. “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, for they are they which testify of Me.” “And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” In other words, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

This Holy Spirit has one mind running throughout the Bible. There is nothing more evident to the Bible student than that the same mind that speaks in the first chapter of Genesis is the same one that speaks in the third chapter of John, and the same that speaks in the last chapter of Revelation. Any one who will study the Bible carefully must discover that this is the Book of one mind. Now, pray tell me, where is the man that can begin a book fifteen hundred years before he finishes it? Where is the man that can gather up the words of sixty-six authors, or sixty-six books written by half a hundred men, having the same mind? And yet I hold in my hands a Book that is made up of sixty-six books, and between forty and fifty authors, and all these authors tell us as one man, this word is not ours – thus saith the Lord. Ingersoll used to travel around over the country and say: “Is the Bible inspired? Yes. So is Milton; so is Shakespeare; so is my almanac.” Hastings used to answer that very nicely: “Yes, Milton is inspired, but where did Milton ever say, ‘Thus saith the Lord’? Yes, Shakespeare is inspired, but where did Shakespeare ever say, ‘Thus saith the Lord’? Yes, your almanac

is inspired, according to your definition, but where does your almanac, six hundred times, as Moses says, say ‘Thus saith the Lord’?” The Apostle Peter is writing, but he declares it is not his writing. “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

He not only knew there was one mind running throughout the Bible, and that is what made him a power, but he also knew there is one light running throughout this Bible. “We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.” This Bible says of itself, “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” The first thing that God said, in the first chapter of Genesis, is this, “Let there be light, and there was light.” This Book has done more to throw light into the world than all the other books put together. Every word in this world that has ever thrown light on the subject of man and his eternal destiny has got its light out of this Book. In this Book you will find a light shining forward for thirteen or fourteen hundred years, telling us the Light of the world is coming. The first four books of the New Testament tell us that Light has come, and the other books of the Bible tell us this Light shall be published to the world; and the last book says, I will show you what will happen until the Judgment Day; and thus the light shines from the morning of creation until the Judgment Day, and the Holy Spirit shows that light shining over every page of the Book, and when your dying hour comes, you will not want Shakespeare under your pillow; you will not care for Milton in that hour; what do you care, when your soul leaps into eternity, about the old almanac? What you want in that hour is the light of the eternal God. That is what made Peter a power.

He knew not only that there was one mind running through this Book, and one light shining through it, but there was one life running through it. “A light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.” God begins with the heart when He makes a new man. “Create in me a clean heart, God, and renew a right spirit within me.” When the Lord our God said. Let there be light, there was light; and when you study the law of God and find out your sins, and take your flight to Calvary and say. What shall I do, God speaks to your soul and says. Let there be light, and there is light, and when the light shines in on your soul, there is life there. In a few weeks to come the snow will all melt away, the sun will shine with greater power upon us, and when the light comes and dwells

longer upon the earth during the long days, and the snow is melted away, then you will find that the little sprigs begin to come out of the earth, the light bringing them life; and as you look into the Bible you will find life in God's Word. It is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. You will find the entire Old Testament is pointing to Him who says, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." You will find in the New Testament that this Life stood down by the side of death and said. Live, and the dead came back to life. You will find that this One who called Himself the Way, the Truth and the Life, stepped up to the sinners, and forgave them, and took them home with Him. Oh, the wonderful Life that runs throughout the Word of God!

2. The Holy Ghost Said Exactly What He Meant

The Apostle Peter not only knew that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, but he knew the Holy Ghost always said exactly what He meant.

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation."

When a man reads the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Catechism, and this twentieth verse of the first chapter of the second epistle of Peter, he cannot help but make up his mind that Peter was a Lutheran. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." If there was any one thing that brought on the Reformation, it is the fact that God means what He says, and if there was any one thing that made a division between Dr. Luther and John Calvin, it was this, that you have absolutely no right to put your own private interpretation on God's Word; that the Holy Spirit means exactly what He says; and when it came to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, Dr. Luther says. Are you going to believe the Holy Ghost, or Zwingli? Are you going to believe the Holy Ghost or John Calvin? Are you going to believe that "This is My body and this is My blood," or are you going to leave out the words of the Holy Spirit, and put in the word "represents"? What are you going to do about it? What made the Apostle Peter such a powerful man is this, he says, God has spoken, and God means what He says; and that is what I will preach, let the world say what it will. If I have a right to step before this intelligent audience and say, Here is a chapter that says so and so, but God meant something else; if I

have the right to turn to another verse and say, It is true that God says so and so, but He did not mean it that way, He meant something else, pray tell me, what are the people to believe, and when do you know you are getting God's eternal truth? I maintain when God says hell, He means hell; when He says heaven. He means heaven; when He says repent, He means repent; when He says there is only one way to heaven He means it, and just as sure as you expect to go to heaven by any other way than through the Lord Jesus Christ you will be damned, as sure as there is a God in heaven. This is the truth, and that is what makes powder in the pulpit, and just as long as men are going to stand up and find fault with the Bible, and try to make themselves appear wise because they think they have found a little mistake of the Holy Ghost somewhere, just so sure you are going to find that the pulpit is losing its power, the church its members, and the people their souls, and everything is going to destruction. How shall we fill the house of God? The only way I know is to preach the unchangeable Word of God in all its purity, and it is a power, just as sure as God in heaven is a power.

God has said some things in this Book pretty hard to understand; in fact, He has said some things nobody can understand. He has said, Let there be light, and there was light, and you do not know today yet what light is. He said in this Book that a flood was coming that would reach fifteen cubits above the highest mountain. No man on earth today can understand how the water could be that high, and yet the little sea shells on top of the mountains tell us the water was there; you do not understand it. The people in the days of Noah did not understand why there was any sense in building an ark out on the dry ground. They did not understand in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah how a solid city could go down, but God said. It will. They did not understand in the days of Isaiah how it was possible for a virgin to conceive and bear a Son, and call His name Emmanuel, but God said she would. They did not understand in the days of Zechariah how God could come down on earth and ride a colt into Jerusalem, but God said He would. They did not understand in the days when the Twenty-Second Psalm was written how it should be possible that the Savior should come and have His hands pierced, and His feet pierced, when the Jews killed men with stones; but God said He would have His hands and His feet pierced. When Jesus walked out of the temple and they showed Him that large temple and those large walls, and He said, Not one stone shall remain on top of the other, they said that could not be. When He looked around and saw the Jews, and

said the time would come when they should scatter all over the world, and they should remain a separate nation until the Judgment Day, they said. How can that be?

But I tell you the Holy Spirit means what He says. The flood did come; Sodom and Gomorrah did go down; Jerusalem was destroyed and the plow turned the furrow in the days of Titus where that wall stood; the Jews are scattered all over the world as God said they would be; Christ did ride into Jerusalem when the children sang: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that Cometh in the name of the Lord!" It was a hard saying when God said, "I will not suffer Mine Holy One to see corruption." They did not understand how He could sleep in the grave and arise again, but He did arise; He did conquer death; and so I would have you to understand that Jesus means what He says through the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, away with human opinions about this and about that. I have heard men say, "I admire the pastor of the First Lutheran church for having the courage to say what he believes, but I differ with him in opinion." I want you to understand that I have never preached opinions from this pulpit; it is not a question of opinion; I have absolutely no right to stand here and give you my opinion, for it is not worth any more than yours; we do not come to church to get opinions; I claim that I can back up every sermon I have preached, with the Word of God, and it is not my opinion nor yours, it is the eternal Word of God, and you will find it so on the Judgment day. I have nothing to take back, and I never will; God does not want me to.

What is the power of the pulpit? It is the power of the Apostle Peter; it is God's Word. Christ is the only Savior of the world. Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, and your household, and that is the only hope. If this were my last sermon, as the Apostle Peter felt it was his last when he wrote this epistle, I would say tonight, come to the catechetical lectures and study God's Word, learn the plan of salvation quickly, before you are lost; and then I would say, when you know the right faith, stick to it until you die. What we need in the present day is more catechetical instruction, better indoctrination of the Bible, in order that we may know what we believe, and then stand by it until we die. If this were my last sermon I would say, you people of God, when you call a minister into this pulpit, if he insists on giving you his opinion, put him out just as quickly as you possibly can; call a man of God who will not find fault with the Bible; who will not find fault with Jesus

Christ, but hold Him up as the only hope; and the Bible as the only inspired Word of God; the Word by which we live and the Word by which we die; the Word that will show us the way to heaven. May God bless the message of the hour to your eternal good is my prayer. Amen.

16. Paul's Power. Septuagesima Sunday.

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 1 Cor. 9:24-10:5.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

LAST SUNDAY EVENING we had the pleasure of listening to the power of Peter. I showed you from God's Word that the power of that great apostle lay in two things: First, that he positively knew that Jesus Christ was the only Savior of the world; and, in the second place, he positively knew that the Bible was the inspired Word of God; and, having settled those two facts in his mind, he went into the world with a power that God blessed. There is one other apostle who undoubtedly was a superior of all the rest in many ways, and that was the apostle Paul. I shall therefore, direct your attention this evening to:

Paul's Power

And may the Holy Spirit give power to bring your souls nearer to Jesus, your Savior, Peter's Savior, Paul's Savior, the Savior of the world.

I. Paul a Power

I remark that the apostle Paul would have been a power no difference what his calling.

1. What If Paul Had Been A Robber?

The first thought that struck me in reading this text was, what would Paul have been if he had been a robber. Just imagine a man with all the fire, and all the energy that Paul had, a bad man, a thief, in a community. Why, there is not a man in American history, great as our robbers have been – even a Jesse James could not begin to be what Paul might have been if he had served the devil fully instead of his God. Paul would not have been one of those sneaking little thieves going from house to house and plundering home after home. If Paul had been a thief instead of a Christian minister, he would have been at the head of the great movements of the world to rob people. If he had lived in our day he would have been at the head of some Standard Oil Company; he would have been at the head of some great trust; he would have been the champion among the world's financiers, and he would have robbed the people at the greatest rate possible.

2. What If Paul Had Been A Farmer?

I not only see him in the capacity of sin as a great power, but I see him even a great man if he had been a farmer. It is often said in the country when a boy is a little weak in the back or has not got the ability to hold a plow, or to stand a good deal of hard work, that he will do for a preacher, seeming to think that in the pulpit any kind of a back will do; there any kind of a tongue will do; there any kind of a physical structure will do. If you think the apostle Paul went into the ministry because he was a weak man physically, you are mistaken, and if you think any man weak physically will make a good preacher, you are mistaken. It takes as much physical force to preach one sermon as it does to handle the cradle for four hours; it takes as

much physical force to work in this church as it does to run a one-hundred-and-sixty-acre farm alone, I want it simply understood that if you have got a son who is not able to make the best showing with regard to strength; who isn't able to make one of the very best carpenters; who isn't able to handle the hardest labor in this world, never try to make a preacher of him. We have enough of preachers that would not make good farmers, that would not make good mechanics, and they make very, very poor preachers. The apostle Paul was one of those men who went through trials that no physically weak man could ever go through with. He tells us he was whipped by the Jews five times, receiving forty stripes less one; in other words, he received one hundred and ninety-five cuts across his back, that you and I never would have stood; he tells us he was out in the deep, in the water twenty-four hours, and yet did not drown; he was stoned and dragged out of the city for dead, but there was too much vital force in him to die; he arose again; he was whipped, and scourged, and persecuted, not only outside of the church, but in the church; he went through many trials, sometimes having the very clothing torn off of his back; out in the winter, freezing, hungry, wanting a drink and getting none, wanting something to eat, and nothing for him; that man went through trials that no man could go through with unless he had the strength to do any kind of labor to be done in the world.

3. What If Paul Had Been A Lawyer?

The apostle Paul would have been a great power as a lawyer. When he and Silas were put into prison, having been scourged and their feet fastened in the stocks, they began to sing songs of praise at midnight. God Almighty shook that old prison until the people found themselves loose, and the jailer was ready to commit suicide. Paul cried out, "Do thyself no harm; we are all here." Paul could have escaped in that moment. No, he would not; he remained there, and when the jailer came asking, "What shall we do to be saved," he taught him God's Word; he taught him that he must be baptized, and baptized him in the same hour of the night. Not only that, we find when the morning came word was sent to him by the jailer, Now, Paul you can go. No, sir; I did not put myself here and I do not intend to put myself out, and I want you as a jailer to understand that you have no control whatever over me. The very moment they condemned me without a hearing they

condemned a Roman, and I demand of them that they come here themselves and lead me out and give me liberty. No man but a lawyer could have done that. Paul knew the law, and, knowing the law, he made those men his prisoners, instead of being theirs. When he stood before Felix and made him tremble, he showed his ability as a lawyer.

As an orator he could have held the highest position in the world; as a lecturer he could have gone around and won the ears of all the people. Oh, this man was a wonderful power.

4. What If Paul Had Been A Politician?

He was not only a power as a lawyer; he would have been a power as a politician. It is said, preceding our text: “For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ), that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” In those words that I have read you find one of the most beautiful pictures of a true pastor, that can be found in the Word of God. The apostle Paul had the ability of working among common men, and when he found a weak man, he was weak; when he found a strong man, he was strong; when he found a man versed in one line of knowledge, Paul was versed in that line; he could always accommodate himself to any kind of a man he met, and consequently was a great power as a missionary, and he always did that to save souls. All you have to do is to put this man in politics, and you have what politicians call a “good mixer” – a man that can shake hands and win votes anywhere. If Paul had been a politician instead of a man of God, he would have carried the office, no difference for what he ran. If in Mansfield, he would have been elected mayor, if in Ohio, governor, and he would have become President of the United States. In his place he was a power, and he would have been a power as a politician.

5. What If Paul Had Been A Detective?

I not only see him as a power in politics, but he would have been a power as a detective. "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." How did Paul know about this beating the air? How did Paul know all about these races? We have a good many men in the present day, so good they have never seen a race at all; never been inside of a saloon; never seen a gambling den; never seen the world as it is, and the consequence is that they do not know how to preach the Gospel. We have some parents who do not know how to raise their children; they have sons, and the very first thing they say to them is, If I ever catch you in a saloon, watch out! If I ever catch you at a race, watch out! If I ever catch you playing pool, watch out! If I ever catch you doing this, or that, watch out! And it is not very long until the boy is watching out, and just waiting an opportunity to get away from mother, to get away from father, and if that boy does not go to the races, I do not know one who will; if he does not go to the saloon, I do not know one who will. The great trouble is so many people do not train their children rightly. The apostle Paul went to the races to see what was going on; he went to the Olympian games and watched the men, how they would train for months; watched their muscles and watched them run with all the power within them, and thousands of people from all around Rome had come to the north portion of Corinth that they might see the races, and when they were over they brought the winner back with great applause and great cries of joy, and put a little crown of myrtle on his head, and he went home so proud of that crown that he never forgot it; and then this great thinker said, if I can just get men to run like that for the crown of heaven, then I have made a point; he noticed that. these men that go into the races do not drink anything; they are temperate; they are very careful not to eat nor drink too much; they must win the race, and they must be prepared for the race; and he applied that to souls, and preached to the world such a temperance sermon as they never heard before. This apostle Paul would have made a good detective; they all acknowledged that. Why did they send him to Damascus to catch Christians? He was one of the best detectives; he could follow out any clue; he could find a Christian if there was one to be found; he knew the world. If my boy had lived, I would have said to him, wait until you are twelve years

old and I will take you to Chicago; I am going to take you through the lowest dives and dens; I am going to show you the worst people in the world; I am going to show you through all the saloons, through all the places that I would not care to mention at home, to show you the world as it is; and I would have made that boy so sick of the lost, condemned world, that he never could have been induced to enter such places. There is a wrong way and a right way to bring up children. You do not want to say, if you touch this beer I will whip you; if you touch this whisky I will whip you. No. Say, here is whisky; it is a good thing in its place but never was made to drink; it will make you thirsty; you might just as well eat salt; it is a good thing for medical purposes, but do not drink it. Then take that boy into a room where a man has *delirium tremens* and tell him that is what whisky did, and that boy will never touch it. You want to have the detective spirit that the apostle Paul had. He was a power as a policeman, and when they wanted to prosecute Christians they could not find a better man than Paul, and they sent him to Damascus to find them.

6. What If Paul Had Been An Olympic Athlete?

And I believe, from the description given of him in another chapter that if he had gone into the Olympian games for the purpose of winning the race, I think he would have won it. A man that could run over the world, as Paul did, as a missionary, was no ordinary runner. Not only that, but I believe the Apostle Paul, if he had prepared himself for the ring, would have been as great a pugilist as we have in this country. He refers to that when he says, "So fight I, not as one that beateth the air." Paul would never have missed a man if he had struck at him; he would have hit him, and hit him hard. A man that could be out in the water for twenty-four hours without going down; a man that could have one hundred and ninety-five stripes across his back and never wither; a man that could be stoned, and dragged out for dead, and rise again, would not find a fist in any enemy's hand that would down him. The Apostle Paul was a power.

II. Paul The Greatest Preacher The World Has Ever Seen

What then did he do? He took all these powers that God gave him and concentrated them into himself as a missionary of the Gospel, and thereby proved that he was the greatest preacher the world has ever seen.

1. Paul Was Certain Of His Call

No one ever felt his Divine call more keenly than Saul did; no one was ever more certain of his call. As I stated a moment ago, he started up to Damascus as a policeman to persecute Christians; the Lord God knew that there is a power; He knew that there is a conscientious man; He knew that if that man knew the truth he would fight for it until he died, consequently He wanted to teach that man one thing he did not know, and that was that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, the One prophesied in the Old Testament; therefore He unhorses him, throws him down, and cries from heaven: “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” – and Saul fell into another world; Saul realized that he had been mistaken. Saul said, “Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?” “Arise, and go to a certain street that is called Straight, and I will send a man there, and he will tell you what to do.” In other words, Jesus Christ wanted to teach Saul there that he had to be converted, not by power from heaven, but by the Gospel in the hands of man; so He sent Ananias to the street called Straight; and to Ananias, who went, God said, “Look, behold, he prayeth.” There you see the policeman on his knees praying God to have mercy on him. His eyes were blinded, and this man Ananias tells him the wonderful truths of the Gospel; tells him to arise, and be baptized, and to wash away his sins, and there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he saw a new world; he saw a new avenue for his power, and he started out to preach the Gospel to the world.

3. Paul Was Conscientious

Not only was he Divinely called – there is no question about that – but he was as conscientious as a man could be. In this same chapter I would call attention to the fact that he could have earned a living in many ways without being a minister of the Gospel; I would further call your attention to the fact that he might have been a married man and enjoyed his family like other men; I call your attention to the fact that according to the Old Testament teaching that every minister of the Gospel should be paid for his

preaching, but he had made such a blunder that he made up his mind he would never give the world a chance to say that he was in the ministry for the money that was in it, and therefore, instead of taking a salary, he made tents, he worked and earned money at night, that he might go and preach the Gospel on the Sabbath day. He was so conscientious that he said: "But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things that it should so be done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void. For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel!" The great Spurgeon one time said to a young man who desired to study for the ministry, "If you can help it, don't preach." That may look like wrong advice, but he meant it just as he said it. When a man is Divinely called to preach, no power under heaven can keep him from it, and so he said to the young man, "If you can help preaching, don't preach." When the Apostle Paul was converted, no power in the world could keep him from preaching. "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." He was so conscientious that he gave his services and his life for the ministry.

Paul Was Willing To Make Any Sacrifice

He was willing to make any sacrifice; nothing was too much for him, no road too stony, no sea too wide; the heathen were not too far away for him; wherever God said go, he went. I often think of that little song we sing in the Young People's meeting, "I'll go where you want me to go," and here we sit and do not go; it is easy to sing but harder to do. The Apostle Paul not only sang, but he did these things; if God said go to Europe, he went to Europe; if He said to go to Macedonia, he went to Macedonia; if God said go to Rome, he went to Rome; if God said you will be crucified, he said, so be it; when God said die, he died; there was nothing too much for Paul; he was a power in the ministry, and one of the greatest missionaries the world has ever known.

4. Paul Was Direct

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." The Apostle Paul was a very plain preacher, a very striking preacher;

he never said a sentence that did not hit somebody; when he struck, he struck with the intention of hitting something. You know sometimes in training these pugilists, they must stand and strike in the air, and keep on fighting; to the Apostle Paul that looked like foolishness, and it does to me when I see young men going to the gymnasium over here trying to develop their muscle. In a man's life there is so much to do in the way of really doing something, that he should make every blow count; there is so much to be accomplished for the good of our fellowmen that we ought to hit something every time we strike. That is the kind of a preacher Paul was, and he struck at himself as well as others. Paul calls attention to the fact that the world was lost by nature and that he himself must be very careful or he would be lost. "Lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." One thing that made him such a powerful preacher was that he studied his own heart, his own conscience, his own soul, and whenever he found himself in the wrong he struck at Paul, and in striking at Paul, he struck all. Hardly a week passes that some one does not come to me and say, how did you know that I did this, and that, when the truth is I did not know it until then, but the reason I can hit you so well is that I hit myself every day, and we are just alike; you are thinking just as I am and you are acting just as I am; whenever you hit one man real hard you have hit the whole congregation. God knows how to find us out.

5. Paul Preached With Good Doctrine

Not only do we find that he was a very conscientious man, whose call was Divine, and a great missionary, willing to make any sacrifice, but we find, furthermore, that he was a man who preached with the wonderful power of a good doctrine. As far as his doctrine was concerned, he was no perfectionist, nor was he an immersionist, nor do I find that he was a moralist, nor a Universalist.

I say that this man was not a *perfectionist*. The Apostle Paul did not say, I do not need to fight any more; he did not say, I have reached perfection. No, he said if these men will run as they run and fight as they fight for a little crown of myrtle, then I must fight and I must run, and ye must fight and ye must run, that we receive the crown of eternal life, and consequently he laid down the doctrine of a true Christian on sanctification. No difference how old we get and how much progress we make in religion,

there is always a day before us that will allow us to grow. Walking through the woods with my brother the other day he showed me seven or eight trees that he had sold. I said, "Don't you know that timber is going to be very expensive and that it is a mistake to sell off your trees these days?" He said, "You do not understand: those trees are done growing and will decay." You see I had not thought about that. Whenever a tree stops growing it will decay, and whenever a man reaches a point in life that he does not grow any more, he begins to decay. These people who are talking about perfection, who are so perfect that they cannot get any more so, are dying from decay. The thing we must learn as true Christians is this, no difference how perfect we get, there is a Savior before us more perfect; and I appeal to you who are sitting before me tonight, who have been trying to serve the Lord, haven't you found every day of your lives that there was a growth possible, and that you never have attained perfection? And thus you will go on through life, striving to come nearer and nearer perfection, and when you breathe your last breath, your last words ought to be, in the language of this great fighter: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." The Apostle Paul never forgot that race he witnessed; he never forgot the race of life; he never forgot the race of a Christian. May God help us all tonight to walk on the path of Jesus Christ, dressed alone in His righteousness, being faithful unto death, that we may receive the crown of eternal life.

I said a moment ago that Paul was not an *immersionist*. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea."

We hear it said by immersionists that if we are not immersed we are not baptized, and some people are even led to question themselves, whether they had not better go down to the river, or to the tank where fifteen or twenty others have been in the same water, and be put under. I want you to be satisfied in your own minds tonight, satisfied from the Scriptures, that the Apostle Paul was not an immersionist. I do not say he did not believe immersion was baptism; I simply mean to say he did not believe the word baptism meant immersion and nothing else. What is the story referred to in the Old Testament? You will understand that when Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, he at last came to the shores of the sea; Pharaoh was coming behind with the six hundred chosen chariots; the cloud went before

them in the day time, and at night a pillar of fire, and as Pharaoh followed He swung the cloud behind the Israelites as a protection, and the winds blew all that night, and the waters separated, and the Word of God tells us distinctly that Moses and the children of Israel walked over on dry land, with the waters up on either side of them; then, when they came across, Moses held his rod over the sea again, and the waters came together and Pharaoh and all his host were drowned. There is no question about two things: One is that Moses and the children of Israel were not in the water; and the other is that Pharaoh and his host were all immersed, and the only water that possibly could have touched Moses and the children of Israel was the spray from the walls of water beside them. Now, Paul says: And all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." The children of Israel were baptized without walking into a drop of water, and he never said one word about Pharaoh and the host that followed him being baptized, yet we do know they were all immersed. If going under water is immersion, and immersion is baptism, then Pharaoh was immersed and baptized. No. Paul taught us very distinctly here that baptism may mean simply moistening with water that came upon them as they came through between the separated waters. Another thing we must not overlook, that not only were the adults baptized, but all were baptized. The Bible tells us that there were six hundred thousand soldiers, besides the women and children; Paul says that all of them were baptized; and we are told in another place in the Word of God that as they were saved, so we are saved by baptism. There are two things taught in this text tonight that I want all Lutherans and all others never to forget, and that is that there was a baptism without immersion, and that all, from the smallest to the largest were baptized, and that is good old Bible doctrine.

I go further and say that the Apostle Paul was not a *moralist*. A great many people in these days think if they keep the ten commandments and treat their neighbors about half decent, that when they come to die everything will be all right, whether they are members of God's Church or not, whether they are baptized or not, whether they go to the Lord's Supper or not, whether they have faith in Jesus Christ or not; they are moralists. The Apostle Paul was no moralist. "And did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ." You will remember that the Children of Israel crossed the sea and went out a few days into the

wilderness; they became thirsty and could find nothing to drink, and they murmured against Moses, and Moses said, Lord, what shall I do? God said, You go and speak to the Rock – at another time, strike the Rock – and the water will flow. And so he took his rod and struck the Rock and the water flowed, and they drank that drink. And now, says Paul, that Rock was Christ, and the drink they got saved the whole race, Jesus Christ is the Rock of salvation, and the Rock of Ages, and you will remember that He had to be smitten on Calvary before the water flowed that gives us eternal life, from which we shall never thirst. You have there the picture of the Rock of Ages, our only Savior. The Apostle Paul had been a moralist until he heard the voice of this Rock from heaven saying, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” So then we have a Rock that after it was smitten has given forth the waters from which we must drink, and that is our only hope of salvation. Paul was no moralist.

Again I would call attention to the fact that he was not a *Universalist*. “But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness.” Six hundred thousand soldiers, not to mention the women and the children, started across the Red Sea, were baptized as they crossed over, and in the desert they rebelled against God, and they carried on their rebellion until only two out of the six hundred thousand reached the promised land, and Moses, because he struck the Rock instead of speaking to it, was not permitted to enter the land of Canaan. If only two out of the six hundred thousand reached the land of Canaan, I wonder why so many think we are all going to reach heaven? When the Lord Jesus Christ said, “He that believeth not shall be damned, how do you expect to go to heaven if you reject Him? When the Word of God distinctly teaches, too, that many are called but few are chosen, how do you expect everybody to reach heaven? When the Word says, “Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it,” how do you expect everybody is going to heaven? When Jesus Christ Himself said the rich man who would not even feed Lazarus at his table was in hell and cried out that he must have a drop of water to cool his burning tongue, how do you say there is no hell hereafter? The Apostle Paul would have been the biggest fool the world ever saw if he had given his life for missionary purposes, if missionaries were not necessary, and if I grant

once that everybody is going to be saved no difference what they do nor how they live, I say the most foolish thing in all the world is to build churches. The most inconsistent thing in the world is for Universalists to put up a church building and pay out their money to save people who were never lost. If a man should come running up street and say, I was just down to the river and saved a man; you would say, Where is the river? and he would reply, There isn't any, you would think his proper place was in a lunatic asylum. The Apostle Paul never struck unless he hit something, and if Universalism is not true, the harder you strike it the better, and I want to strike it just as hard as I can, because it is doing more to damn souls today than anything I know of. Grant me a universal salvation for the world, instead of belief in Christ, and our boys and girls will go to the devil just as fast as they can. The thing for us to learn from God's eternal Word is that when God speaks he means it. What made Paul such a wonderful power was that he preached the truth. He knew that men were not perfect and therefore told them to fight for it; he knew that God wanted everybody baptized, young and old, and therefore spoke of a baptism for all; he knew that people could be baptized with water whether they were put under it or not, and therefore said those that walked over on dry ground were baptized; he knew that people needed to drink of the water of the Rock of Ages, and therefore called attention to justification by faith without the deeds of the law; he knew that many would be lost unless they were saved while living, and therefore called attention to the falling of many in the wilderness.

The Lutheran Doctrine Of The Lord's Supper

In this same chapter we cannot help but notice the Lutheran doctrine in the Lord's Supper. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" I am not here tonight to say that Paul was a Lutheran, but I do say that Luther was Pauline; I do say every doctrine that Luther taught to the world is exactly what the Apostle Paul taught in all his epistles, and if you can show me one doctrine in Luther's Catechism that I cannot harmonize with the writings of the Apostle Paul, I will give up. What I do say is that if ever a man was doctrinal, and gave to the world much information, it was Paul. Stop and think of the great fact that Paul gave all these epistles to the world, with possibly the exception of

eight. You cannot do better than to read his epistles carefully, for he was a power that is felt today all over the world. May God bless these promises and help us all to think as He would have us think; to act as He would have us act; and to give our hearts to the Rock, which, smitten, will give forth the waters of eternal life, is my prayer. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the privilege of giving Thy Word to these immortal souls. We pray that Thou wilt help us to appreciate Thy great gift to the world in giving the Apostle Paul to us. Father in heaven, if one man with the grace of God in him can so change the very face of the world, and all theology as that man Saul did, converted by Thee, what a power we might all be if we would simply let Thee do with us as it is Thy will. We ask Thee, heavenly Father, that Thou wilt bless the service of this evening hour; we pray that we may all drink in these beautiful words, and hold fast to them and never give them up. We ask Thee to give us a life that is growing. Do Thou help us to fight for right and truth and to defend it until we die. We pray Thee to bless us not only as we are standing here, but as we go to our respective homes, and may every one in this house this evening become a messenger of the Gospel we have heard, so that this Word may not only reach the many who are assembled here, but through them reach the many that ought to hear Thy Word and do not. Father in heaven, even as one little spark can start a great conflagration, so we pray Thee that each one, as he or she goes home tonight, may be a spark of love and truth in that home to bring Thy Gospel to every one under each roof; and we pray Thee that each home again may carry the flame to other homes, until all the people shall know the great truth as it is in the Rock that was smitten, through whom we obtain the water of eternal life. Hear this, our prayer, for the sake of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

17. Paul's Path. Sexagesima Sunday.

For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise. For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly), I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed forevermore, knoweth that I lie not. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter. Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me. My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 2 Cor. 11:19-12:9.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ: –

IF THERE IS ANY ONE THING the apostle Paul would have done, it was to die for the truth. He declares here, “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for ever more, knoweth that I lie not.” What a glorious thing it would be if every man in the world today could say that God knows that I lie not. He not only tried his best to tell the truth at all times, but he always spoke as in the presence of God. He not only regarded it a great weakness to tell a falsehood and to exaggerate, but he regarded it as a great weakness even to compare the truths which he uttered, with the truths of God’s Word. In the parable which we heard this morning we learned the great power of the eternal Word of God, what a good seed it is, and how it brings forth a harvest unto eternal life if it is sown on good ground. The Lord Jesus Christ gave the apostle Paul a wonderful revelation about fourteen years before he wrote this epistle; during all those fourteen years he kept that revelation to himself; he never said a word to his best friends about it; in fact, he felt it would be dangerous to say anything about it for fear the people would put his word on a level with Word of God. In order, therefore, that the honor might be given to the Book of Revelation, he kept that great revelation to himself, as stated before, a period of exactly fourteen years. When we read this lesson we cannot help thinking what a path of life Paul had to travel. Last Sunday I spoke to you of Paul’s Power, and tonight I will call your attention to:

Paul’s Path

And may we, walking on the path that Paul walked, walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. While this text is lengthy, the whole truth may be summed up in two thoughts:

- I. Paul’s path was a perilous one; and
- II. Paul’s path was a prosperous one.

I. Paul’s path was a perilous one.

He tells us in one of the verses of this text that Satan buffeted him, struck the thorn in the flesh until he cried three times to God to take that thorn away. In the chapter preceding, he calls attention to the fact that Satan in his day was transforming himself into an angel of light. In other words, the apostle Paul never failed to recognize that the path over which he was going was perilous because he had to fight Satan every inch of the way. He found Satan in the church; in the elements; in the world, and in his own body.

1. He Found Satan In The Church

It is said that his letters were mighty and powerful, but his bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible. These things were said by members of his own congregation. The apostle Paul, as we heard last Sunday evening, was a man of power. No man lacking physical power could endure the trials through which he passed, but because he was not big, like some men are, because he was a little hump-shouldered and not as straight as some men are, the people at Corinth began to think, we better get a different pastor; we better get a man that makes a better personal appearance, his bodily presence is weak, and as far as his speech is concerned, it is contemptible. These things were said by people who were Christians, brought to the Lord by the apostle Paul, himself.

Not only did they say that, but there were false teachers coming up every day.

“But what I do, that will I do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan, himself, is transformed into an angel of light.”

In other words, there were people in the days of the apostle Paul that were just watching for a chance to say something about him; they were looking out for occasion; they wanted to compare him with other men, and tried their best to get the Corinthians to frown on the apostle Paul. He was perfectly willing to bear that as far as he himself was concerned, but he knew these men were not true ministers of the Gospel; he knew they were not there to bring the truth he had taught, and for the sake of the church, and

for the glory of God, it became necessary for him to defend himself; it became necessary for him to fight the devil in the church.

Not only did he find that some people behind his back were trying to belittle him, and that false teachers were trying to teach false doctrines, but he found even among the good people of the church a certain class that would tolerate anything, no difference what, that was said against him, and he refers to them in the words of our text:

“For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise. For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak.”

In other words, the people would say. Look at Paul; the man has a weak body, his speech is contemptible; the thing for you to do is to get a smarter and a better man here to proclaim the Gospel. The apostle Paul, said. You think you are wise; I want to tell you that you suffer these men because you are really a set of fools, but I tell you sarcastically that you are a bright set of people. I do not know of better irony in God’s Word than this: “For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.” Just about as much irony as when Job said to the officers who were standing around him reproving him, “Wisdom will die with you.” It was in the same spirit that the apostle Paul said, you would let people come right up to you and make slaves of you; you will let men swallow you; you will let men take you prisoners; you will let men stand in your presence and swell up with pride; you will actually let men come up to you and slap you in the face, and think you are wise, but you stand there like a set of dumb fools and let the church of God suffer, and you never defend your church; you never defend me; I have been away quite a while, and have endured and suffered, and fought my own battles, and done all I possibly could for you, but like a set of dumb sheep, you have kept your mouths closed and let the wolves come and slap our very church in the face. It does seem to me that we ought to ask ourselves the question, as a congregation, no difference where we are, do we defend the truth as we ought? Do we defend our church as we ought? It is one thing to sit here in the pew and listen to God’s Word; it is another thing tomorrow night in some worldly circle to hear some people run down your pastor, and stand there like dumb oxen and never say a word, even

help the world along in saying something against the minister, or the Sunday School superintendent, or the officers of the church.

If you are true children of God, you ought to stand up and fight for the church of your Lord and Master; it is not built on your pastor, or on any man; it rests on the Rock of Ages, – there is the church of your Lord Jesus Christ, and when you fail to stand up and defend those that are working for that cause, you fail to defend your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Himself. Paul needed no defense; he was too great a man to need any little man to defend him. There are men right in our own church council that do not need any defense; there are officers in this church that do not need any defense; we need not be ashamed of our congregation, but there is always some enemy glad to run down the best people that live, no difference who they are, and it becomes our duty not to let the devil have his own way. Paul recognized this on the path of life, and consequently writes a very sharp letter and says. Beware that you do not consider yourselves wise, and at the same time suffer yourselves to be made slaves, to be devoured, to be taken into bondage, to let others exalt themselves over you and smite you in the face. No man in Mansfield can strike a blow at any good church member in this church without striking at you. No man can attack the service here for God. without striking at the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the devil is back of it all, do not forget that.

Do not expect to see the devil coming around with big horns and cloven feet, standing in your midst, and shouting. Watch out, I am the devil! No. He comes with religious talk, his false religion, and tries to devour you, and upset everything that rests alone upon Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. No wonder the apostle Paul wrote sentences like these: “In perils among false brethren”; “Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.” The apostle Paul then stood in a place where he had to fight the devil right in the church, and that is what you and I must do every day of our lives.

2. He Fought Satan In Storms

Not only did he fight the devil in the church, but also had to fight him in the elements, in the very storms.

“Thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters.”

So we find, my dear friends, that the same Satan who did blow the house and home of Job down in a storm, the same Satan who tried to wreck the little ship and drown Jesus Christ, was the same Satan that tried different times to drown Paul in the Mediterranean Sea. Remember, the apostle Paul had not yet passed through that wonderful storm which brought him to Miletus; that occurred at least two years after this. Four times the apostle Paul was shipwrecked and thrown out into the deep; once for twenty-four long hours he was battling with the waters, and perhaps many a time the question came to him, Shall I give up and drown, or shall I not? But he kept on fighting, realizing that the same Satan that brought about the storm on the sea of Galilee, is the same Satan that could not bear to have Paul preach the Gospel to the world, and he fought for life amidst all the elements, and won, to the glory of God.

3. He Fought Him In The World At Large

And not only did Paul fight the devil in the storm, but in the world at large.

“In labors more abundant; in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.”

Stop and think of that path! It just seems as if all the powers of hell were turned loose and put on the path of Paul to see how they might abuse him; it made no difference whether Jew or Gentile; whether on water or on land; whether he was in the city or out in the country; whether it was day or night; whether winter or summer, there was not, seemingly, a single place on God's earth that Paul could go that the devil was not there; if nothing better, they would whip him – five times thirty-nine stripes on his back; stoned three times; thrown out by robbers; caught and abused and almost murdered; we find him in the summer time almost dying of thirst; in the

winter time not enough clothing to keep him warm – freezing; if he is in the city, with a room in which to stay at night, the soldiers are watching and guarding the stairway, and there is no way of escape but to be let down in a basket by a rope; wherever he goes he finds the devil trying to conquer him; the whole world was against him; the civil government was against him; his own countrymen were against him; his own friends were against him. If any man in the history of the world could say God and I are all alone, it was Paul. Oh, it was a perilous path he traveled over.

4. He Fought Satan in Himself

He not only found that Satan was in the world; he found the devil was right in himself, trying to conquer him,

“And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.”

What this thorn in the flesh was I do not suppose we will know before the Judgment Day. All kinds of conjectures have been given; some think his eyes were so sore he could hardly see; some think he had some physical trouble such as Luther himself had, at times so painful that he had to shriek for help; no difference what it was, it is generally conceded it was some kind of physical trouble, some kind of a disease that took hold of his body, and in spite of all his work, this disease would at times take hold of him, and as nearly as he could describe it, it was like a large thorn in the flesh, with Satan striking that thorn, buffeting, hitting it with his fist, driving it deeper and deeper, until he felt he could stand it no longer, and three times he cried out, O God, take this thorn out! I have been stoned and I have been whipped; I have fought the waves in the sea; I have battled with robbers at night, but, O God, I have never had anything like this thorn! Take Satan away, for he is striking it! God, take it away! Help me! Help me! It was a perilous path over which he was traveling, but we learn that God allowed the thorn to remain. What a blow that is to Christian Science! We have in the present day, people who seem to think that after all, pain is only imaginary; that after all, we are simply mind, and that if we could think as God would have us think, we could think all pain out of existence.

I met a lady in the city of Columbus a few months ago who called me to her home, pretending that she had some business to attend to, but she wanted to let me know that she was a Christian Scientist, and was trying to make me one; it was not very long until she said, "The real truth is that pain is only found in people who have sinned and do not know how to think. Why," said she, "we are nothing at all, and consequently there cannot be pain in nothing." I never like to say anything harsh to a lady, but after talking to her about an hour, I said, "I now fully agree with you; I have discovered that you are nothing." These people actually think the physical body is only a sort of a thing that we imagine, and therefore pain is only imaginary, and that the way to get well is simply to say, I am well, and that is the end of it. If you break a limb, of course you just think of the bones and say, They are nothing, and put them together. Oh, nonsense! They tell us the reason we have sickness is because we are guilty of some great sin. Let us not forget, my dear friends, that when the young man was let down through the roof at the feet of Jesus to be healed, Christ said to him, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," and when Christ says the sins are forgiven, they are forgiven, but the young man is still just as sick as he was before; it was not until the people doubted whether He had the right to forgive, that He said, "Take up thy bed and walk." The man was just as much forgiven before he got up to walk as after he had carried his bed. The apostle Paul said three times, Lord, take this thorn away from me; God said. No, you keep that thorn; My grace is sufficient for thee. Paul was not a Christian Scientist, and I want to warn my people today to beware of Christian Science! Like all other isms, it is trying to rob you of the sacraments. Quite innocently people turn to Christian Science, and do not know that Christian Science has no baptism, no Lord's Supper, and no Christ on Calvary dying for the sins of the world. If the devil can only get people to believe that they are Christians, and get rid of Christ bleeding on Calvary, then he has won the victory, and I warn you to be careful that you do not go to dabbling in any kind of Christianity that has not got Jesus Christ in it as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, for just as sure as you do, that religion is of the devil, I care not by what name it is known. The test of a true religion is Jesus Christ, my Redeemer, my Savior, the Lamb of God that taketh away my sins. I say that for the encouragement of the sick. Some of the best people of this church this evening are at home with sad hearts because they cannot be in the house of God, and I want no angel of the

devil in the form of an angel of light to step into these homes and burden their consciences, and make them believe that if they just thought rightly they are not sick at all. When a man has a fever, he is sick; when he has a broken limb, it is broken; there is a bone there that is broken, and every man knows it, and let us beware that we do not let the devil make us believe there is nothing where something exists, and that there is something where there is nothing.

ii. It Was A Prosperous Path

The apostle Paul had to fight every inch of the perilous path of life, and yet I bring you this day the glorious news that it was a prosperous path.

If the apostle Paul had been told on the day that he was converted, that he would have to pass through all that he did pass through. Oh, how he would have trembled, and tried, like Jonah, to flee away from his God! What a beautiful thought it is in Providence that God never tells us what is coming tomorrow; and what a beautiful thought it is to know that every time we fight one battle we get strength for the next. On this path of life the apostle Paul was led gloriously by the hand of God that was constantly around him, above him, below him, and in him.

1. The Hand of God Was Around Him

I say the hand of God was around him. Do you suppose the apostle Paul could have passed through all these trials if it had not been that the hand of God was around him? I see him out in the deep for a whole day and a night. Why did he not go down? The arm of God was around him. I see him three times in shipwrecks, when the vessel sinks and men must flee for their lives, and I have no doubt that in those three times some men went down to death, but why was Paul saved? The arm of God was around him. I see them beating him with stripes, thirty-nine times – five times thirty-nine – enough to kill any man, but Paul lives on. How does he stand it all? The hand of God is around him. I see them stone him, and when he is stoned, they take his body and throw it outside of the city on a pile of stones, but he does not die. The arm of God is around him. I see him in the winter, freezing, no hand to give him a garment to cover that cold body of his. Why

does he not freeze? God's arm is around him. I see him in the midst of the church, fighting the devil in the church, fighting him in the storms, fighting him in the world, fighting him in his own body. How does he stand it? How does he, hold out? Where does he get his strength? The arm of God is around him every day, and whenever he has won one battle, the arm of God leads him to the next, and, remembering how he won the victory out in the waters for twenty-four hours, he says, what do I care for robbers? and he won the victory there. Knowing how he endured when he fought the robbers, when he was cold he said, God's arm will keep me warm. And thus he goes through life, meeting one trial after the other, getting strength every time for the next battle, and the more he looks back, and the more he sees the battles he has fought, the more glorious his life becomes. Did you ever stop to think that the only man's life really worth having is the man with the victories behind him? The soldier who went to war and stayed there for four long years and came home without ever seeing a battle, we have forgotten long ago; but the one soldier who has made more of an impression on me than any other I ever saw, is the man who showed me the mark on his forehead where the bullet struck and glanced off; who showed me the mark across his neck where the sword almost severed his head from his body; he showed me where his right arm had been removed; and where his left arm had been removed; and he showed me his limb with the bullet inside; and there is a soldier I will never forget; there was a soldier who did not regret at all that he had been to war. Wherever he went he was asked to tell his story. His arms were gone and his body scarred, but he had been loyal, and when he came home he was the pride of the nation. Only six men in the United States can say the same thing, that they have lost both of their arms and are still living. I want to tell you the trouble with most of us is, that we are cowards; we want to go through life with never a battle, and we never get strength because we have not fought the battles. Let us remember, the arm of God is around the true soldier of Christ.

2. The Arm of God Was Above Him

Not only around Paul, but above him, was the arm of God.

“In Damascus the governor under Aretas, the king, kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me; and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.”

There was a time when Paul started for Damascus as a policeman to arrest Christians; Paul became converted, and Damascus now hated him, who at one time was sent there to arrest Christians. A garrison is formed and the order is given to watch him tonight, to apprehend him, put him in jail, and forever settle this question. But that night the hand of God comes to him, bringing a rope and a basket, and touches the brain of his friends and says, think I That night the hand of God came and lifted up the window, and placed Paul in the basket, fastened the rope securely, and said, Remember, Paul, My hand is above you; I will let you down; I will let you escape. There in the darkness of the night, Paul runs across the country and is free! Who freed him? The hand that was over him. Oh, says some one, that is all nonsense; it was not God at all; God did not make the basket; God did not make the rope; it was men that did these things; it was men that saved Paul. Dear friends, there were men on that wall, and there were men down on the ground. Why did those men on the ground have their swords in their hands, while those at the window had the rope? Where did that rope come from? Who put it into the mind of one man to save Paul, while others were trying to kill him? I want you to understand it was God that made the basket; it was God that put into the hearts of men to save his life; it was God that put strength into the hand that held the rope that let Paul down, and so, after all, it is the hand of God above him on this perilous path that made Paul's path so glorious and prosperous.

That same hand has been over you many a day and you did not know it; that same hand has permitted you to escape many a death trap, and you never thanked God for it.

3. The Hand of God Was Under Him

That hand was not only over him, but that hand of God was also under him.

“It is not expedient for me, doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth); such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth): how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

It was a wonderful vision that Paul had. Just when it took place, we do not know, except that it was just fourteen years before the day he wrote this letter. It was no dream. It made such a wonderful impression on Paul that he never could forget it, and yet he never dared tell it. He speaks of himself as a man, because he did not want to tell them directly that it was himself, but we all know who this man was. The probability is that it occurred about the time they stoned him. He tells us, himself, that he was beaten with rods, and once was he stoned. It may be when he was stoned the people picked him up and threw him out on that pile of rocks, thinking, there lie, you little preacher; there lie and be food for the dogs of the city of Jerusalem; but they did not recognize that when they threw him out on that pile of rocks that they threw him into the hand of the Rock of Ages, and while his body was lying there that Hand was under him and lifted him up, lifted him up into the skies, where the birds fly, through the first heaven, lifted him up above the bird's flight, past the stars and zones of stars and whirling world systems, up, up, past the second heaven; and on that same Hand that started with him from the little pile of rocks near Jerusalem, that hand of the Rock of Ages, he went higher, further than eye had ever penetrated? away up where the angels are in the presence of God, into Paradise! We often say, if only our dead could come back and tell us how it is over there; we often say, why did not God send some one back from beyond the veil? Dear friends. He did. That hand that lifted Paul up into the third heaven, into Paradise, that same Hand left him down again; but remember one thing; Paul said that he saw things there, and heard things there, that he could not tell on earth. Why, my dear friends, you might just as well take Luther's catechism and try to teach a drove of sheep as to try to teach us poor earthly mortals here about the glories that my boy and your girl, and my father and your mother, and our dear friends who have died in Christ, are seeing up there in Paradise. But how did they get there? The hand of God under them put them there; and that is the Hand that led Paul over the perilous path and made him prosperous.

4. The Hand of God was Within Him

Not only was the hand of God under him, but the hand of God was within him.

“And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

The apostle Paul, as I said before, felt that thorn as he never felt anything else. Three times he prayed to the Father in heaven in this manner: Oh Father, remember me. Thy servant; remember how I struggled in the sea a night and a day; remember how three times I thought the sea would be my grave;’ remember me when the robbers caught me, and how I was treated in the cities, in the prisons, how I was whipped and scourged until my body was covered with blood! Father in heaven, remember me when they hit me with the stones and my soul took its flight fourteen years ago to Paradise! O Father in heaven, all that I could bear so easily, but now I have a burden that I can bear no longer! O Father in heaven, this thorn! this thorn! this thorn! Take it away, O Father, take it away! O Father, take this thorn away! But the answer comes, Paul, I will leave that thorn just where it is; I have lifted you up to the third heaven, but for fear you will think on earth that you are no man any more, I will keep the thorn in your flesh; I will put you down there and I will let the devil strike that thorn in order that you may not forget that there is a devil; I will let him strike hard, but remember one thing, Paul, while I will not take that thorn out of you, I will put My hand against the point inside, and I will help you to bear it. We will not take this thorn and throw it down, and walk away from it, but I will take My hand and put it inside of you, and I will take the thorn into My wounded hand and hold it, and I will help you to bear it, and I will help you to bear that thorn until you die. If you die with your head cut off, I will with My wounded hand pick up that head and put on it the crown of eternal life, and I will take your body and your soul and preserve them in these hands of Mine, and I will keep you until the Resurrection morning, when I will reunite you and bring you in all glory to stand in heaven in the presence of the holy angels, as one who has traveled the most perilous path, and the

most glorious and prosperous path in life. Paul, Paul, remember one thing: My grace is sufficient for thee.

Dear friends, I have just reached the point where now I would like to begin to preach the grace of God, sufficient for you and sufficient for me, but it is time to close.

Prayer

O Father in heaven, we thank Thee that there is no path in life hidden from Thee; no path so thorny that Thou hast not traveled over it; no thorn so sharp nor so lasting that Thou art not willing to put Thy hand against its sharpness, and with Thy grace help us to bear the burden. We thank Thee, heavenly Father, for the life, and the struggles, and the glorious victories of the Apostle Paul. And we pray Thee, heavenly Father, that Thou wilt help us in this life to find comfort for our own souls in this evening hour. We pray Thee to go with us this week in all our duties and may we each hour remember that Thy hand is sufficiently strong around us, above us, under us and in us, to lead us prosperously over the path of life. Father in heaven, remember this evening our public and our private prayers; remember those that we pray in secret that need not be secret, and remember those prayers in secret that must be secret because Thou alone canst understand them. Father in heaven, may this day bring us twenty-four hours nearer to the consummation of that plan so glorious in Thy hands. Lord, make us defenders of the truth. Give us the spirit of a Paul, sanctified by Thy Holy Spirit on high. Hear this, our prayer, for Jesus sake, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

18. Paul's Poem.

Quinquagesima Sunday.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind, charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity. 1 Cor. 13.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THE APOSTLE PAUL was one of the greatest men that ever appeared in this world. He was great in every sense; he was great simply as a man; he was great as an apostle and did more than all the other eleven; he was great as a Christian; he was great as a missionary; he was great as a poet. If the Apostle Paul had been a German, he would have surpassed Schiller and Goethe; if an Englishman, he would have surpassed Shakespeare and Milton. There is not one poem in the world that surpasses the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. Peter was the apostle of hope; Paul the apostle of faith, the great theologian; and John was the apostle of love, but John never proclaimed love with more purity and with more sincerity than Paul

did in this thirteenth chapter. We wish therefore that the Holy Spirit may bless the message of the morning while we dwell on

Paul's Poem

- I. Love's valuation.
- II. Love's operation.
- III. Love's duration.

I. What is love worth?

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.”

What a valuation of true love!

1. Love Is Worth More Than Eloquence

First of all we are reminded of the fact that it is worth more than all eloquence.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.”

There have been men in history who, by means of their eloquence have changed the destiny of nations; men who, by their eloquence have decided who shall sit upon the throne and who shall not; there have been men who have swayed the audience to and fro like the waves of the sea, by means of a gifted tongue, and yet, my friends, if we had tongues such as men never had on earth, if we had the tongues of angels, like those that sang on the plains of Judea when Christ was born, if we had the tongues of the angel that swept over the valley of Sennacherib and slew one hundred and eighty-five thousand soldiers, if we had the eloquence of those that sing around the throne on high, and had not love in our hearts, we would be like sounding

brass or a tinkling cymbal. Brass will make music, but you never saw a brass instrument in all your life that had a heart in it. Any one may take cymbals and strike them together, and make a noise, but after it is all done it is only a noise; and when a man stands before his congregation, or before a public audience of any kind, and simply has an eloquent tongue, and no love for humanity, you might as well blow through a brass horn, or take cymbals, strike them together and make a noise. There is nothing in it. The Apostle Paul therefore calls attention to the fact that all eloquence amounts to nothing of there is no love in the heart of him who speaks.

2. Love Is Worth More Than Inspiration

Again, this love is worth more than great inspiration. How many mothers of old used to pray that their sons might be prophets. A Prophet in the days of the Old Testament was far greater than a king. Elijah, the prophet, stood far above Ahab or his queen; but though a man were a prophet, if he had not love in his heart, he would be nothing. Jonah was a prophet; he was sent out by the Lord God to tell Nineveh that that city must fall; when Nineveh failed to fall, because it repented, poor Jonah felt sad and sorrowful; he would rather have seen that whole city, with all its women and children, go down to death, rather than to be humiliated in his prophecy not coming true. We are told here that if a man has the gift of prophecy; if God should select him to foretell what would happen under certain conditions, that honor amounts to nothing if he has no love in his heart.

3. Love Is Worth More Than Education

Not only is it worth more than all prophecy, but it is worth more than even the best education. Education is a power. "Knowledge is power," is an old phrase that we found in our readers thirty years ago, and any one who will look at the difference between ignorance and knowledge, can at once see what a power it is to have a good education. There are men all around us who could wield a wonderful power if they had only received the proper education. The old subject that has been discussed in many a college hall, "Intellect in rags," can be seen in every city. There are intellects, which, if they had been properly developed, could have been a power in any community. But suppose a man has a good intellect, suppose he has had all

the opportunity in the world for a good education, and then fails to have love in his heart for humanity, what does that education amount to? It is as nothing, says the Apostle Paul.

4. Love Is Worth More Than Wisdom

“And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.”

We are told by the Savior that if we had faith like a grain of mustard seed, we could say to yonder mountain, be removed into the sea, and it would be removed. Suppose we had that faith, says Paul, suppose we had the faith to say to a certain mountain, a tunnel shall go through you, it would go; suppose we had the faith to say that a ship should plow from the Atlantic ocean to the Pacific, just as soon as a nation has the faith, it can be done. It is done. The United States has the faith to say that we are not going away around by the Cape, that we can cut off thousands of miles, that the Isthmus must be removed into the sea, and it is going to be done; but, after all, though we have a faith that can remove mountains, though we have a faith that can tunnel the Alps, what is all that worth if we possess not love? Suppose that Strong should be right when he says, that after the canal is completed from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the surface of the earth shall be changed five thousand miles, and the last great battle of the world shall be between the Slavs on the one side and the Anglo-Saxons on the other; suppose he should be right, that the last great battle shall be a thousand times worse than the battles we have been reading about between Russia and Japan, what good will all the fighting and cutting of canals do, if we simply mean murder instead of love, to make the world better?

5. Love Is Worth More Than Benevolence

Love is worth more than even the greatest benevolence.

“And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.”

There are very few people in this world so charitable that they give up everything they have and themselves remain poor. We have men in the present day who are giving great gifts to the world, but if you notice closely, their capital is growing all the time; they are not giving of their own necessity; they are not giving of the principal; they are only taking a part of the interest and giving it to the world to build themselves monuments; but suppose there should be a man in this world as rich as Rockefeller, as rich as Carnegie, who would not only give his interest, but all his principal for institutions of mercy, and himself should put on the beggar's garments, and go about from home to home, having no house in which to live, no money in the bank, not the price to stay all night at a hotel, the world would say. Did you ever see anything like that? But the great Apostle Paul says, if a man were so benevolent that he would give up all he had for the poor, if he has not love, it amounts to nothing. Dear Friends, the man that would give up all he had, if he did not give it from a spirit of love, but from a spirit of selfishness, not to the glory of God, but to the glory of himself, though he gives all he has, it amounts to nothing.

6. Love Is Worth More Than Martyrdom

This love of which I speak is worth more than eloquence, more than inspiration, more than education, more than even a miraculous faith, worth more than all benevolence, worth more than even martyrdom.

There have been men who laid down their lives for this cause or that; there are people today who are laying down their lives in heathen lands. Did you not read the other day how some of those Japanese followed their leader right in the face of the mouth of cannon, permitting themselves to be shot to death, knowing there was no possible escape? They were willing to die for what they considered a principle, and yet, after all, my friends, what sense is there in any man standing before a cannon when it is shot off? What sense is there in any man simply holding up his life and saying, Now take it! And even though we do, and it is not for love's sake, love for the Gospel, love for God, after all it is only a kind of selfish way of committing suicide – it amounts to nothing.

II. Both Negative and Positive

Not only does this great poem of Paul's show us the valuation, but also the operation of this love, and this operation, if you will notice carefully, is both negative and positive.

1. Negative

“Charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity.” There you have the negative operation of true love.

One of the first things we hold up before the world is that charity envieth not, is never jealous. I need not tell you how much jealousy there is in the world. I could not if I wanted to. The only person in the world that is not an object of jealousy, is the one that absolutely amounts to nothing. Even a drayman is jealous of a drayman that does more than he does. Saloon keepers are jealous of each other. Store keepers are jealous of each other. Lawyers are jealous of each other. Doctors are jealous of each other. Preachers are jealous of each other. There is not a man on earth, I do not care who he is or where he is, that is a success in anything, but that there are others all around who would be glad if that man should fail, glad if that one should not succeed. Now then, says Paul, if a man has love in his breast, he envieth not. A man who has love in his heart cannot possibly rejoice at the downfall of another, cannot possibly feel bad because some one else is prospering. If you have love in your heart you cannot possibly find fault with him who can lead better than you can lead, who can do business better than you can do it, who can succeed better than you can.

This love not only envieth not, but this love is not rash in forming judgment. “Charity vaunteth not itself,” or, as stated in the margin, “is not rash.” How many people there are that are always ready to form a judgment in a moment! The first thing they hear they are ready to draw the conclusion that it is true, and they are glad it is true, and therefore they will now condemn the man unheard. If there is anything in the world that is unjust, it is to take a man and hang him to the first telephone pole because he is supposed to be guilty of a crime. The laws of every country demand that criminals have a hearing and they be not condemned unheard, but in our daily lives we are condemning people unheard all the time. The first little remark we hear is accepted as true, and without any personal investigation

whatever, we condemn the man. Love cannot do that. True love will always treat another as one would wish to be treated. How would you like to have every little gossip that goes around condemning you be accepted as truth itself? We say condemning you to be accepted as truth itself.

We say again, this true love vaunteth not itself.

It is not puffed up. How could love be puffed up? And yet we find many such people all around us. We need not go very far to find them. Lay your hand on your own breast and you have found the first one that naturally is considerably puffed up. Every little success tends to make us proud, and whenever we are full of pride we are ready to take a fall. True love never takes any glory to itself. True love, when it meets with success, gives the glory to God. True love cares nothing for flattery, and very little about rebuke. True love does its duty, and when it has done that, does not care one way or the other personally what the world thinks. When we use that word, "I do not care," we never mean as to what people do, or how they accept this truth, but it is simply a personal declaration that when we have done right we do not care whether the world flatters us, or whether the world rebukes us, it is right, and right remains right forever. Love is not puffed up.

Again, love doth not behave itself unseemly. Some people think the only way to be truly polite is to buy some good book on etiquette, then read the rules, just how to act when somebody comes, and just how to act when they go away: just how to act in public, and how to act in private, and we never see one of these students of an etiquette book, but that we think, the Lord have mercy on them! Oh, that they had love in their hearts, then they would always know just how to act. It is said of Robert Burns that he was the most polite man that Europe ever had. Robert Burns never read any book on etiquette. Robert Burns never paid any attention to the actions of other people. Robert Burns loved the mice, and sang of the mice; he loved the flies and sang of the flies; he loved the little insects, and sang of them; he loved the little flowers, the daisies, and sang of them; he loved everything that God's hand ever touched, and he was so filled with love that he always acted just right, no difference where you found him. He knew how to act on the farm; he was the plowman's poet. He knew how to act because he loved, and love never makes very many mistakes – doth not behave itself unseemly.

Love seeketh not her own. Love is never selfish. Some people seem to think they are unselfish when they try to grasp as much of this world as they

can, and do not take of their own and give it again. We have two kinds of very great selfishness in the world: The one is the kind that wants everything and holds to it; the other is the kind that wants as much as possible, and gives a little at a time to others. True love does not even make use of the opportunity of getting all that it can get. True love, I say, in the heart of man is not willing to accept everything that it can and call its own. The Lord Jesus Christ owned the heavens and the earth. He might have kept all those things as His own, but notice the grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, how He became poor that we through His poverty might become rich. The man that has 160 acres of land and wants to grasp another farm here and another farm there, with the intention of getting that and holding it as his own, is selfish. The man that reaches out and gets everything he can get, whether it is capital or ground, is selfish. The only truly unselfish man in the world is the one that might get more and more, and will not even take it, – the man that might grasp his thousands, but is satisfied with his hundreds, – the man that might own what rightly belongs to his neighbor, but instead of that says, No, it might be my own, but I will let it be. – Seeketh not her own. It does not say, Keepeth not her own, but Seeketh not her own.

How many people there are in this world that have not homes of their own, that might have had millions, that might have grasped here and there, but they see that life is more than simply a little dirt, that it is more than simply buildings, that it is more than simply bank accounts. The greatest lives that can be lived in this world are those that want enough to eat and enough to wear, enough to do good here and there, that see opportunities for grasping but let the opportunity go, not because it is not right to have what God might put into our hands, but because when there are two opportunities before us, and the one is good and the other is better, there is only one right thing to do, and that is to grasp the better and let the good go. It does not take a very deep man to see that life is more than simply to grasp things; that life is more than simply to own things. It is more blessed to give than to receive, and sometimes it is more blessed not to take than to take. We want to find the real definition of love this morning. Love seeketh not her own. Love only takes what it can use for God's glory, and does not take everything that it might possess.

Love is not easily provoked. Some people are provoked at everything they hear. Some people cannot sit down and listen to a sermon, but they get

half angry, and go home, and grumble and growl on the streets. Some people cannot go through a simple business transaction without having a fight on their hands. Some people cannot be rebuked for anything but their temper arises and they are angry, always provoked. If there is anything in the world a man ought to try to get rid of, it is an uncontrolled temper; it is this thing of always getting provoked at everything he hears. Love has charity; love listens; love wants to be rebuked at times in order to become truly humble; love is glad to see the two sides of every question; love wants instruction; love, after all is done, keeps cool, and says, I will make the best of it. Let us be very careful that we do not let that spirit which is not from above, but from below, rule in our hearts. Let us rather have love.

Again, Love thinketh no evil. How many people there are that are constantly suspicious, wondering whether this man is moral, wondering whether this woman is just as good as she ought to be, wondering whether this is just right and that just right, and they know nothing; all they know is that they have seen somebody talk to somebody, or seen somebody in somebody's company, and when one is lively, they say that is a great sinner, and when one stands back in the corner and has nothing to say, that there is a great saint; but mark what I tell you, the man that stands in the corner, never having very much to say, the woman that sits around and hasn't much to say, those are the very people you can have suspicion of you are going to suspect anybody; they are the ones that are going to sin a great deal more than those who are talking and having their pleasure. Do not misjudge people. Do not be suspicious. If you have any love in your heart, consider every person innocent until proven guilty. Consider every person moral until you know they are not. Consider everybody good until they are proven evil. We are living in a time when the world considers a man guilty until he is proven innocent, and that is a damnable principle. That is a principle that will ruin any church; that will ruin any home; that will ruin the morals of all people. What right have I to think my brother is anything but a good man until it is demonstrated that he is bad? What right have I to think that any woman in the world is evil until it is positively known that she is not good? For my part I have always believed that there are thousands and thousands of good Christian men all around us; I have always believed that the world is full of good, virtuous women. If I believed that every man on earth is a bad man, he would have a perfect right to draw the conclusion that I am

bad. Love must be charitable and love must consider innocent everything that is not known as guilty. Love thinketh no evil.

Love rejoiceth not in iniquity. There you have the reason why so many people are constantly feeding upon suspicion, constantly considering people guilty when they are innocent, because they rejoice in iniquity. There are some people absolutely not happy unless they can hear of some terrible crime that has been committed, unless they can run from house to house and gossip about the fall of this woman or that man; they do not want the things good, and holy, and right. True love rejoiceth not in iniquity. True love mourns when people fall. True love feels sad when people go wrong. True love rejoiceth not in iniquity. There, dear friends, you get the negative view of true love, as the great poet Paul sang in this wonderful poem.

2. Positive

This operation is not only negative, but it is positive. Love strikes out both ways and reaches in all directions. There is one verse in the Bible that has been very often misquoted, and we cannot blame the people, because the first translation was not right. I suppose every one of you can quote it: “We love Him because He first loved us.” You find it in the catechism, you find it in King James’ translation. How it ever got there I do not know; it is not in the original; it is not in the authorized version. The correct translation of that verse is, “We love, because He first loved us” – not “We love Him.” I will grant that it is correct to say that we even love God because He first loved us, but it is all wrong to say that we love Him only, because He first loved us. The real truth that the Lord God wishes to teach us is this, that God in heaven loved us, and because He loved us we love, not only Him, but we love everything. We love because He first loved us. Edward Irving at one time walked into a room where a very sick boy was lying near the gate of death; the boy was too sick to talk to very long. Edward Irving had the good sense to walk in and lay his hand upon the feverish brow of the dying boy, and said “My boy, God loves you,” and then walked out of the room. That boy lay there for hours meditating upon the message of Edward Irving. At last he raised up in his bed, another move and he stepped out on the floor, stood up in the presence of his family and said, “God loves me! God loves me!” And not only did that boy get well, but there was created in his breast a new life. “God loves me!” And he went out into the world and

became a power. Why? Because there was not anything any more that he could not love, because God loved him. The secret of this beautiful poem is that Paul recognized that what God did for Saul made Paul love everything, and what made Paul love everything, should make you and me love everything. In other words, this love is not only negative, it is positive.

“Charity suffereth long.” Look at Christ. Oh, how He felt the punishment of His disciples! How He bore with the ungodly world! How He patiently waited! Look at the apostle Paul. How they whipped him; how they scourged him; how they did all they could to kill him, but he endured it all. Why? Because he loved the hand that threw the stone to kill him. He loved the hand that wielded the lash across his back. Why? We love because He loves us.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind. Oh, what a power there is in kindness! And I sometimes wonder why it is that we are so dumb as not to see that. We think if we can say something ugly to some one that we have won a victory. We think that if we can show some ungodly act, that that is revenge, that that is power. There is no power in the world so great as true kindness. What a power a church like this could be if every member would spend every day looking around to see if he could not say something or do something that would cheer some broken heart. Oh, what a power there is in kindness! I tell you, a man will never forget the kind act you do him; he cannot forget it. That is love. Love has eyes in all directions. Be careful that you do not form the habit of walking on the street, seeing no one; be careful that you do not form the habit that you do not see your next door neighbor suffering, that you never see when there is nothing on the table of your neighbor. Be careful that you are not walking around in the world with your eyes closed. Look for an opportunity to say something, and do something that will make the world better. That is love.

Love rejoiceth in the truth. Nicodemus came to Christ at night because he wanted the truth. He found the truth; he rejoiced in it, and when Christ was crucified, he took the body and laid it in the grave. There was nothing he would not have loved to do for his Master, because he rejoiced in the truth. How many people we have in the present day that do not want the truth; they do not want that which strikes them. I hear it said every day by people, “I love the truth. I want something that strikes me.” Nine times out of ten the people that say that, take offense when you strike them. The real truth is that very few people love the things that hurt, but nevertheless, if we

have love in our hearts as we ought to have it, we want the truth at any cost. May God help us to have that disposition of mind that we want everything investigated. God help us that every plant which He hath not planted shall be rooted up, and everything that He has not planted needs rooting up, needs investigation from all sides, and that is what love will do.

“Beareth all things.” Just see what Christ bore because He loved the world! Just see what Paul bore because he loved the world! Just see what Dr. Luther endured in the 16th century because he loved the world!

“Love beareth all things and believeth all things.” Not the things the devil says and the things the liar says, but believes everything that God says. When God speaks, love says it must be true; it cannot be otherwise. Love says, take God at His word. If there were a better way to say what ought to be said, God would have said it. When God says, “This is My body,” He means it. When He says, “This is My blood,” love says, believe it because God has spoken it. When God says, “Thy sins are forgiven thee,” believe it. When God says, “Repent,” believe it. When God says there is a heaven, believe it. When God says there is a hell, believe it. Love never will doubt the Word of God.

“Hopeth all things.” We are taught in the Word of God that all things work together for good to them that love God. If you have that love of God in your heart, do not complain if you are sick. Do not complain when death comes into your home. Do not complain if you have done all you can to keep the old home and it gets away from you. Let it go. There will be some good in it somewhere. Love hopeth all things.

Love “endureth all things.” No difference what comes, be it friend or foe, be it bright and sunny or dark and stormy, whatever comes, says Paul, we will endure it all, because we have love.

I tell you, my friends, this poem is not the result of a fifteen minutes’ thought; it is not the result of the life of a day; it is a whole life of a great man under the hand and in the hand of a great God, bubbling forth the mighty springs of love in the heart.

III. Love’s Duration

Let us notice the duration of this love.

“Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope and charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity.”

Charity never faileth. Love lasts. Oh, what a beautiful theme! The immortal soul wants something that will last. All around us are things that are not going to last. In this Book we have some wonderful prophecies, but they have been fulfilled. These prophecies are not needed forever. They will not last.

On the day of Pentecost God gave the apostles tongues with which to proclaim the Gospel to all nations, but, my friends, there is a time coming when we will not need all the languages any more. You will find no Greek language spoken today correctly on earth. The Latin language is vanishing. Many languages of a thousand years ago are not heard any more. Our own mother tongue is vanishing. Some of your parents could not have talked English; some of your children cannot talk German today. If the grandfathers were living the grandchildren could not talk to them. Languages vanish. Tongues vanish. Knowledge vanishes. The love of God is older than language, and the love which we are to have in our hearts will last long after knowledge is gone.

You seem to think that knowledge lasts? Why, no, it does not. During the past century nearly all the inventions in the world were discovered, but if you were to say that in the present century we are going to use the inventions of the last century, you would be mistaken. There are foundries where you will find the iron piled up high of machines that were made twenty-five years ago that cannot be used any more. We read in our magazines today that the steam engine will soon be a thing of the past. It was the glory of the 19th century. Simpson, who discovered chloroform, was heralded to the world as a great scientist. His own neighbors 10 years later said, take the book out of the colleges; it isn't worth anything any more. Knowledge is vanishing. Not many years ago an old doctor supposed he had made a wonderful discovery, that you could take poison out of a calf and put it into a man, and keep him from getting the smallpox. That man was given a trip around the world and heralded as the very image of

knowledge. Today we discover that the cells of cow-pox and of cancer belong to the same family, and you are wondering why there are so many cancers and so many diseases among the people. It will not be many years longer until the world will wish that Dr. Jenner has never been born. Knowledge is vanishing. What we know today will pass away in ten years from now, but love abideth forever. Oh, notice the duration of this love! Even longer than all knowledge and science. "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I am known." And today, though we think we are men, we are only children. What we know today will be considered child's play in eternity.

All that we know today will vanish, even our present sight. "For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face." This morning we thank God for our eyes; we are so thankful that we can read His holy Word; we are so thankful that we can sing the songs of praise. If you and I should be struck blind this morning, Oh, how sad we would feel, and yet, my friends, these eyes of ours shall see in the presence of God in such a way that our present sight is as blindness. Present sight shall vanish away, but love never.

And now abideth faith. Faith will last longer than knowledge; faith will last longer than prophecy, but there is even a time coming when faith will be needed no more. When you and I stand before our God on the Judgment Day, there will not be one word said about faith.

Hope will last a long, long time. As long as there is life there is hope. But when the Judgment Day is past for those that are lost, for the damned, there will be absolutely no hope any more. It is gone forever. Love will never die.

And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity. The greatest of these is love. Why? Because faith must die; hope must pass away, but for all eternity love must reign, as long as there is a God, for God is love, and only when we let that love reign in our hearts will we become children of God. The thought came to me as I read this beautiful poem over and over, and prayed and meditated on it, I believe I know why it is such a beautiful poem. I believe I know why Paul wrote it so well. Because he dipped his pen into the blood of Christ On Calvary. Amen.

Prayer

Lord, our God, do Thou give us a portion of that love in our hearts today that is worth more than eloquence, that is worth more than inspiration, that is worth more than education, or than even benevolence; that is worth more than even martyrdom without true love. We pray Thee, our heavenly Father, that Thou wilt help us to practice this love. We gain strength to walk by walking; we learn to speak by talking, and O God, do Thou help us to increase this love by loving, and by loving with Thy eternal love. We pray Thee, O God, that Thou wilt help us this morning to exercise this love in the church, in the home and in the State; and while we are exercising this love, let us pray to Thee for more love, in Thine own prayer:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

19. Paul's Plea. *First Sunday in Lent.*

We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation). Giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed: but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the Word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. 2 Cor. 6:1-10.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ: –

THIS IS THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT. I wish you could hear the apostle Paul instead of me during this Lenten season. I have often thought I should like to hear him who said, "I am determined to know nothing among men but Christ and Him crucified," preach a sermon on the sufferings and passion of Jesus. The apostle Paul was well versed in the Old Testament. He knew the story of the fall of man and of his determination to get away from the true and living God. He knew the story of the sacrifices which were types of the promised Savior. He knew the story of the uplifted brazen serpent, which was only a type of Jesus who should be lifted up on Calvary. He knew the stubborn Israel as well as any man that ever lived, because he himself was one of them, and he knew what the grace of God had done for him. He knew that every man on earth needed salvation as much as he did, and therefore, he gave up all of this world that he might become an ambassador

for the glory of Christ. “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” In this last word you find the burden of the plea that Paul made to a dying world. Be ye reconciled to God! And I might cry out right now, to you as an individual standing before me. Are you reconciled with God? Have you made peace with your God, through the Lord Jesus Christ?

The Plea Of Paul

Paul’s plea was made in behalf:

- I Of souls.
- II Of the Church.
- III Of the truth.

I. Paul’s Plea For Souls

“We then as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee; behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation”).

If there ever was a time, my friends when people ought to think of the salvation of their souls, above any other time, it is the Lenten season. In this season of the year the Church of God all over the world is considering the great passion and suffering of Christ on His way to Calvary and on the cross, and if it is a good thing to set apart a day to commemorate the birth of the father of our country, or to set apart a day in commemoration of the Declaration of Independence, how much more should it be the duty of the Church of God to set apart a season of the year when we shall say farewell to the world, and meditate on the awful sufferings of Christ, that we might have eternal life, and when I speak of a passion season, and a season set apart for the purpose of meditating upon the crucifixion of Jesus, I do not mean that the balance of the year we should become worldly again, or that we should go back and away from that cross again, but I do mean to say

that we ought to spend forty days in a year meditating upon the cross and upon Christ thereon, so that the whole year we may live nearer to Jesus. I, therefore, beg of you as a congregation, do not sit at home on Thursday evening as if you did not know that the house of God is here. I beg of you, do not stay away from the best service that the Church of God can give, when it holds up the passion of Christ. I make a special plea with the council of my church, I beg of you, do not get careless. I have rebuked you, I have begged of you, I would like to plead with you tonight, standing by the cross of Jesus; I say I beg of you, by the cross of Jesus, stand close to your church and to your Savior, and meditate on the awful sufferings of Christ, I make a plea for souls and –

"...beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."

You know what it means to receive bread in vain. If a hungry man comes to your door and you give him bread, and he throws it to the dogs, he has received it in vain. If a man is dying of thirst, and you give him the water, and he spills it out, he has received it in vain. If a man who is begging receives money for the support of his family, and goes down to a saloon and drinks until he is intoxicated and robbed of the gift that he received, surely he received that gift in vain. If salvation is offered to you tonight and you refuse to accept it, you receive the grace of God in vain. Paul's plea to a dying world was, Do not, as an immortal soul that might be saved, hear the Gospel and reject it, and continue to reject it, for if you do, you are lost forever, and the grace of God has been given to you in vain.

He not only says that some people will hear the Gospel, and hear it and hear it, and at last be lost and damned, but he says that some people who have accepted Christ get careless and reckless, and they, too, receive the grace of God in vain. I picture before my mind tonight a young man who comes to catechetical instruction, prepares himself to hear the Word of God, understands it and promises upon his knees before the altar to be faithful to his God until death, partakes of the bread and wine, and in God's mysterious way receives the body and blood of Christ, after the Sunday School closes hears the preaching of the Word, but sometime or other in his life he finds out that there is a path of sin which he would follow, and the more he follows that the less he wants the light; the more he follows in the footprints of Satan, the less he wants to hear of the Church; he drops out of

the Sunday School class, he drops out of the Church service; he now, instead of coming up and shaking hands with his pastor, tries to avoid him; you can see him no more in sacred surroundings; he is going to destruction. He is sick and dies; his soul is lost. He has received the grace of God in vain. Paul made a plea for men not to receive the grace of God in vain, either by never accepting Christ, or, having accepted Him, by finally rejecting Him. There are others again who receive the grace of God in vain by putting off from day to day what ought to be done at once. "I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation." There is a day to be born; there is a day to be born again. There is a day to be saved, and that day lies somewhere between the hour of birth and the hour of death. That day is offered to every man. It does not come before birth; it cannot come after the words are said, "Ashes to ashes and dust to dust." Paul's plea was to living men not to pass by that day of salvation when offered to them, lest they receive the grace of God in vain. And how often we must see men putting off from winter to winter, and from season to season, what ought to be done today. It may be there is some one listening to me this night who thinks I am a little severe or in bad order, and making my plea too strong, but my friends, I have been taught from my mother's lap that God's house is God's house; I have been taught from my mother's knees that if I cannot behave myself in any church I must stay at home; I have been taught from my mother's knees that salvation is worth more than all the world, and consequently I made the plea, as Paul made it, be careful how you act in God's house; be careful not to consider that this is simply a meeting-house. It is a place where a plea comes from a man as an ambassador from God, pleading with you, Be ye reconciled with God. And that is nothing to laugh at; that is nothing to put off from day to day, for remember, when a man makes such a plea, he makes it as in God's own presence.

"Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

If Jesus Christ were standing here tonight, with His wounded hands and bleeding breast, there would be nothing to joke about. If God Almighty were standing here tonight making a plea with you, you would say, now we must listen; but, my friends, the Word that I am speaking to you tonight is the Word of Him whose hands and breast were bleeding. The words that I

preach to you tonight are the words of the Almighty God. And so Paul made a plea that the people should not receive the grace of God in vain.

Paul set up this great danger signal before the world that they might remember not only that there is a day of salvation, but there is an hour in the day when a man must be saved or lost forever. "Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation." Right now, right in this moment. Paul never had any use for the man that wanted to put off until tomorrow what ought to be done today, or to put off until evening what ought to be done this morning; Paul never made a plea that said, do this before sundown. Paul's great plea was that now is now, and that now is the only opportunity that any man ever did or ever will do anything. If we could simply learn what time means we would not be so foolish as to put off into the future what never can be done in the future. If a man will ever be saved, he must be saved in the present moment. If a man is ever going to be damned, he must be damned in the present moment. There is not a thing ever done that was done in the past, I do not care of what you speak. Here stands a great temple. Stone after stone was laid up on top of each other; at last it was completed and dedicated to the triune and living God; then soon after a man of God stood here where I stand and plead with you as I plead, plead for the same Savior and for the same cause that I plead with you tonight; but remember, every stone in that wall was laid up in the present; when one stone was placed upon the other, it was now, and only now; and every member of this church that was ever saved, was saved in the present; and when you die, it will not be tomorrow; when you breathe your last breath it will be just as much now as if you died this moment. Do you grasp the idea? Paul's plea was, now is the time to be saved. For fear that some of you may not live until the end of this sermon, I hold up before you now Jesus Christ, dying on the cross in your stead, as a substitute for your sins. You were guilty and He was not. He is dying for you, wretched sinner, that you might have eternal life, and says, Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. And, Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. That is true now; it will be true when the Judgment becomes the now; it will be true when eternity is now. I beseech you, therefore, as an ambassador of God, make up your mind this moment that this Christ whom I preach to you tonight shall be your Savior, now.

II. Paul's Plea For The Church

He not only made a plea for souls; Paul's plea was for the church.

“Giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed; but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned.”

When that great mind of Paul begins to reach out, it seems as though He can reach from sky to sky. His love is wonderful. It reminds me of a little verse one time found on the wall in a cell of an insane asylum. The author of these words was not so insane when he wrote them:

“Could we with ink the ocean fill
And were the skies of parchment made,
And every stalk on earth a quill,
To write the love of God to man
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole
If stretched from sky to sky.”

When this great mind of Paul begins to write, one would suppose that a scroll from sky to sky could not contain the thoughts that are crowding themselves into the great pages of God's Word. He has in mind the Church of God, and he says, be careful in your Christian life that you do not give offense to the ministry; that you do not give offense to the Church of God. I know of no better rule of life than to ask yourself the question every day, what influence are my actions now having on the Church of God? What would you think of me as a minister of the Gospel if I stood here tonight and preached purity of life, and tomorrow you find me staggering on the street as a drunkard? What would you think of me if I stood here tonight and prayed God the Holy Spirit to bless us, and tomorrow in my conversation began to curse and swear? What would you think of me as a minister of the Gospel if tonight I said to you, be ye reconciled with God, and tomorrow I show that I am walking in the footprints of the devil? Oh, says the Apostle Paul, I make a plea for the Church. The Church is the bride

of Christ, and therefore, as members of that bride, we should be very careful not to give offense in our lives. The question ought to arise tomorrow, what are those things that I am about to do, what kind of an impression are they going to make on the world concerning my church; what are my actions in the church? I am satisfied if every man would listen to this plea of Paul, he would not come to Sunday school and then run home, and give offense to the Church of God. I am satisfied he would not give offense to the Church of God by living an ungodly life, or by conducting himself in his business affairs in such a way as to hurt and harm the bride of Christ. A man that is a true Christian will ask himself the question, no difference what he does, what effect will this have upon the world as to my church? It ought to regulate marriage; it ought to regulate the home; it ought to regulate all the business affairs of life; it ought to regulate our conversation. How often I find myself talking in public and in private, but not always in such a way that every sentence may be an honor to the Church which I so dearly love.

Let us, therefore, not offend this church, but always come to her defense. How shall we do this? "By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned." The man that tries to live a pure life is coming to the defense of the church. The man that wants to know more of the Bible and more of his catechism is able to defend the truth which he confesses, and is coming to the defense of his church. The man that has much patience and long-suffering, like Paul, and like Christ, is coming to the defense of his church. The man that is always looking out for an opportunity to do some good, kind act for some poor, fallen, wretched being, is coming to the defense of his church. the man that depends wholly and solely upon the light of the Holy Spirit, that is filled with that love of which we heard so much last Sunday, is coming to the defense of his church. My dear friends, as Moses on Mount Sinai, dwelling with God, came down and had to veil his face because he was in the presence of God, so we should always live in such a way that to be in our presence makes people feel that they are in the presence of just such a character. That is the plea of the Apostle Paul.

There are enough words in this text to make a thousand sermons, but let me say, in one word, never do a thing that will hurt your church. Christ purchased it with His blood on Calvary, and when anyone says anything against your church, come to her defense. I pity the poor children who live

in homes where fathers have no more sense than to talk against the church; that live in homes where mothers are fighting their preachers; where children are allowed to hear things that will reflect upon the church, which Jesus Christ bled and died for on Calvary. I used to wonder why it was that every time we would say one word against our pastor our father would say, Now hush right there; hush. When the neighbors would say we needed a change of pastors, father would say, I don't see any need, as long as we have got God's Word preached in its purity, I do not see any need. My friends, I do not remember, in the fifteen years I was under the parental roof, that father or mother ever said one word against their pastor or against their church. At the time I thought they could not see as well as some of the neighbors. We had another neighbor who was always fighting the church, always found fault with this and with that, and his children heard it. Today they have nearly all left the church. No wonder. No wonder. When a parent in the home slaps the bride of Christ in the face, the children will fight her. Paul made a plea for the Church of God, that you do not offend her, and always come to her defense.

III. Paul's Plea For Truth

He made a plea for truth, that stands like a mountain in the distance, which only the fingers of the rays of the sun can touch.

“By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.”

Paul saw very well that the path of life can never be so drawn as to suit everybody. One of the most foolish men on earth is the man that tries to be so popular as to please everybody. It is simply impossible. What pleases a child of the devil can never please a child of God, and what pleases a child of God cannot please a child of the devil. The Apostle Paul recognized there is a path on which a man must go, and that must be the path of Him who said, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no man cometh to the Father but by Me,” and he recognized that when a man takes that path he has got to do some fighting, and continue until the end, and when he

reached the end he changed not his mind, but he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

On the right hand will be those who will defend us; on the left hand will be those who will find fault with us. And so he goes on this straight path and sees on both sides some fighting to be done. By the Word of Truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor on the right and dishonor on the left, by evil report on the left hand and good report on the right hand; as a deceiver on the left, and yet true on the right; as unknown on the left, well known on the right; as dying on the left, behold, we live on the right; as chastened on the left, not killed on the right; as sorrowful on the left, yet always rejoicing on the right; as poor on the left, yet making many rich on the right; as having nothing on the left, and yet possessing all things on the right. A wonderful path! When a man of God does his duty there will be those who will honor him for it and stand by him to the last; there will be others that will find all kinds of fault with him. When a man does his full duty, there are always those that want the truth and rejoice in it and pass good reports; there are others that cannot stand the good news, and, therefore, they pass evil reports. There are those that will stand by the truth and say it is true, no difference how hard it hits us, and there are cowards who will go out and say, he is a deceiver. Some when they hear the truth will say, we know him well and he is popular among us; and then a man that cannot bear the truth will go away and say, I do not know him at all; he is unknown. There are some who will say. Now there is the life in the church; and the man that does not like the truth will go away and say. The church is dying. There are some who will say, We will chasten him; and the others say, But you cannot kill him. Some will find they are very sad; others are rejoicing. The man that proclaims the truth may be so poor as not to have anything but the soul, and the body, and the clothing that he wears, but the man that preaches the truth, even if he has no home, is making his congregation rich, and giving them a home in heaven. He may have nothing, and yet if he has Christ and salvation, he possesses all things.

Such, my friends, is the plea of the Apostle Paul, and now in conclusion let me urge upon you, yourself, to become co-workers with Christ in this great work. I conclude, therefore, with the first verse of my text: "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." Do you realize tonight how much is being done for your

salvation? Do you realize that God is working for it? Do you realize that Paul gave his very life that you might be saved? Do you realize that many a minister of the Gospel is pleading with you that you might be saved? Do you realize that our Sunday school superintendent is giving his life, and his time, that you might be saved? Do you realize that these Sunday school teachers are coming to their teachers' meetings, studying the Word of God, in order that they may become more efficient and sufficient, to work hand in hand that you might be saved? Do you understand tonight that the very angels of heaven, the messengers of God, are watching over the saints, that they may be saved? Do you realize that the great Church of God all over the earth is praying, Thy kingdom come, that you might be saved? Do you understand that the very hand of the Almighty God is pushing down the walls of China, is guiding the war between Russia and Japan, breaking down the walls everywhere, that the Gospel of Christ may have its way all over the world, that every nation on earth may be convinced that there is work being done, work by the hand of God Almighty, by the angels and the saints, and by the living men of God, that you might be saved, and then, when you are saved, you are supposed to take up your hand, as Saul took up the hand of Paul, and work together for the salvation of souls, that none may receive the grace of God in vain? Amen.

Prayer

Our Father in heaven, if we were to pray all night, we could not ask for more than Thou hast taught us in Thy prayer:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

20. Know And Grow. Second Sunday In Lent.

Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor; not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter; because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. 1 Thes. 4:1-7.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THE CELEBRATED MISSIONARY, Louis Harms, tells of an incident that took place in a hotel in Europe, which is worth remembering. A man who was skeptical stepped into that hotel one evening and found an old Book lying on the table, open. He read in that Book the wonderful story of the passion of Christ; he turned away with a kind of a sneer as if to say, this hotel is run by some religious fool that still clings to the old Bible; but the Holy Spirit had impressed the words on his mind, and as he turned away from the old Bible and looked at the wall, he saw a picture which made a deeper impression on his mind; it was the picture of the Savior, blood oozing from his hands, and feet, and breast, and from the thorny crown, while His head was bowed in death, and it seemed that that picture preached a sermon, to him that brought the tears to his eyes, and as they fell they seemed to have the weight to pull his head down low enough to see written below that picture these words: "This is what I have done for thee: What have you done for Me?" And when the landlord stepped into that room he saw there a

man in tears, weeping like Peter of old. He went to him and asked him what was the matter. He said, "I read the old Bible and tried to sneer at it, but God has used that picture on the wall to show me what an unthankful wretch I am. The Savior died for me and I have done nothing so far but ridicule Him and His Church, and now I feel that I must sink into the depths of hell. Oh, what shall I do? What shall I do?" That Christian landlord comforted him that night with the Word of God, showed him the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, but with heavy heart the traveler went away. Six months later he returned and said, with joyful countenance, "Your Lord is now my Lord; your Savior is now my Savior; your salvation and peace are now my salvation and my peace; my home has become like your home; there is only one thing missing, and I want it. What will you take for the picture on the wall that brought me to salvation?"

The more I consider the great sufferings of Jesus Christ, the more I am led to ask myself the question, What can I do for my Savior? And the more I ask myself this question, the more I am troubled with the little doing of some professed Christians who might do more for their Savior. The Apostle Paul had taught the Thessalonians the wonderful Gospel of grace; he had instructed them in the foundation of true religion, then went away and sent Timothy back that he might see how they were getting along. Timothy returned and told Paul that they were still sound in the faith, but that they had not learned sanctification, that they had not learned yet how to conduct themselves, and, with regard to their finances that they were still taking advantage of their neighbors in ungodly ways, and the Apostle Paul felt hurt, and wrote this epistle in order that they might learn to abound more and more in sanctification. "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more." In other words, Christianity is a growth. We cannot stand still. We are either better Christians today than we were last year, or we are not so good; we are either going forward in the line of progress, or we are making retrogression. Let us ask ourselves the question this evening, are we growing in our faith and good works as a thank offering to the Lord Jesus, who laid down His life for us? I bring you this evening the beautiful message,

Know and Grow

- I. Know that you may grow.
- II. Grow that you may know.

I. Know That You May Grow

“Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.”

1. Know

In other words, know, that you may grow. What is it that he wants them to know?

“For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.”

The Apostle Paul in this letter appeals twelve times to the Thessalonians to the great fact that they know, and building upon that which they know, he wants to show them how to grow, and one of the things he calls their attention to in our text, is that they know the commandments, and that is one thing that you and I must know if we ever expect to grow. We must know both tables of the law, and both uses of that law.

So many people in the present time know so little about the first table of the law. Even the world knows something about the golden rule, Love your neighbor as yourself, but how many people are there who realize that our first duty is to know who God is, and how not to take His name in vain, and how to remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Paul had taught the Thessalonians this great law; he held up before them that first table to show them how they should love their God with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their mind, with all their strength. They had been worshipping idols, and by the preaching of Paul they had turned away from their idols to the true and living God. He took his pen and wrote these words: “For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.”

They not only knew the first table of the law, but he taught them also the second. He showed them it was their duty to be good and kind to their fathers and mothers; he showed them that hatred is murder, and that a

murderer shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. He showed them it was necessary to lead pure lives. In the days when the Apostle Paul wrote this epistle there was a condition of affairs throughout that land that was abominable. The home had become like the homes were a few years ago in France, and as they are becoming in our own country. In that day throughout that country it became a dishonor to raise children; in that day it was considered honorable to be the finest lady in the world, as in France where virtue could be bought and sold; in that day men and women were not living a life of virtue; it was the crying sin of that country to which he refers in our text, and he calls their attention to the fact that that kind of a life is abominable, that it is ruining their bodies, and will ruin their souls in hell. He told them that they must not commit adultery; he told them that they must not steal; that they dare not take what does not belong to them by right; that they must tell the truth, for to lie is devilish. He told them that to covet was idolatry, and then, having taught them these commandments, he says, knowing this, they should grow.

Not only did he teach them the two tables of the law, but the two uses of the law. the Ten Commandments are given us for a double purpose. The first purpose is to show us our sins. How would you and I know we are sinners if we had not studied the Ten Commandments? The Apostle Paul tells us he would not have known sin had he not found the commandment, Thou shalt not covet. There were other commandments that Paul felt he had kept, but when he found that one little commandment that he should not covet, he discovered in his heart covetousness, and when he once discovered that in his heart, it wasn't long until he discovered that he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all. You need not take a hammer and hit every finger on my hand to hurt me; when I hurt one finger I have hurt the whole man, and when you have broken one commandment, you have broken all, for every commandment has love running through it, and whenever you cut love in two, you have cut the law in two, you have injured the whole law. The Apostle Paul taught these people the use of the law. He told them that if they would examine these commandments every day, and examine themselves in the light of the commandments, they would discover what was afterwards taught in the Bible, that sin is the transgression of the law.

But we have got these commandments not only to show us our sins, but also to show us the road on which we should travel for sanctification. When

we are trying to live a better life the question comes up. What shall we do? And the first answer is, Know your God, and grow. Stop cursing and swearing and taking God's name in vain, and grow. Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy and grow. Stop hating your fellowmen, but begin to pray for your enemies, and grow. Stop committing adultery, and live virtuous lives, and try to lead others to lead virtuous lives, and grow. Stop stealing, but rather give, and grow. Stop lying; tell the truth, and grow. Stop coveting, rather thank God that your neighbor is prospering, and grow. That is what God wants us to know, that we may grow. Know the whole law.

2. Know the Gospel

Not only shall we know the law, but we shall also know the Gospel.

“Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk”

Received what of us? In this epistle he tells us in different places what he gave them. “For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.” “For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.” Nothing but the Gospel of Christ could ever break down idolatry. “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” It is these things to which Paul refers when he says, “Ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.” In other words, they had heard the whole plan of the Gospel. He had told them of God the Father, the Almighty Maker of heaven and earth; he had told them of the good angels and of the bad angels; he had told them of Providence; he had told them how this God who had created them was watching over them day and night; that in Him they lived, and moved, and had their being. He quoted their own poet to show that there is a Providence; he showed them how God is planning their lives and striving to lead them in the center of that path. He showed them that there is a

Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, that as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness for the people to look at, and live, that so the Son of God was lifted up that they might look at Him and have eternal life. He told them why this Savior had to be God in order that He might pay the debt for a lost world. He showed them how this Savior had to become man that He might, as a substitute, hang on Calvary's cross, and die, as the mighty God; he showed them what that song would mean, that might be penned afterwards:

“Well might the sun in darkness hide
And shut her glories in,
When Christ, the mighty Maker, died,
For man, the creature's sin.”

He showed them how this Savior was King, and Prophet, and High Priest. He showed them how this King in His humiliation had gone down from His conception to the very borrowed grave. He showed them how this mighty King had, in His exaltation, risen from His power as a conqueror in hell to the very throne of God, from whence He is coming to judge the quick and the dead. He showed them the power of the Holy Ghost. He showed them how this Holy Spirit comes to us through His Word and the Holy Sacraments. He taught them how this Holy Spirit when He does come, comes in the Church and offers forgiveness of sin to those who have faith in the dying Lamb. He told them how this Holy Spirit is going to raise up these bodies by quickening them in the grave. He showed them how in the end the Judgment Would come, and that there Would be an eternal death for those who rejected Jesus Christ, and eternal life for those who accepted them. In other words, he taught them the sum and substance of the Apostle's Creed. That is the Gospel that he taught them, and they must know this Gospel in order that they may grow. And I fear too many people are not studying their catechisms enough, are not dwelling enough on these great central doctrines of salvation. He taught them what prayer meant. “We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers.” Paul not only prayed, not only prayed without ceasing, but whenever he did pray, he said, Lord God, bless all those Thessalonians whom I taught; bless all the Corinthians whom I taught; bless all the Romans whom I taught; bless all the people who have heard the teaching of the great Gospel. So he prayed. Paul had studied that prayer. Our Father who art in heaven; he had studied that wonderful prayer that Jesus Christ

taught, showing us how we should pray six times as much for the soul as for the body; showing us how we should pray four times for God to give us good things, and three times to take bad things away from us, showing clearly to whom we shall pray, not to idols, not to some unknown God, but to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, whom we have learned to know in the first commandment. He taught them how they should pray for every man, friend or foe; he showed them how they should pray for spiritual gifts and temporal gifts; furthermore, how they should pray in the only name that will avail before the throne, in the name of Jesus Christ. He taught them to pray in their closets; he taught them to pray everywhere, day and night, to live in constant communion, and all this that they may grow, grow in communion with God. I used to think as a young man when I read of men that prayed three and four hours at a time, that it is simply impossible, that no one would know what to say for three or four hours at a time, but I am convinced that a man cannot only pray three or four hours a day and enjoy it, but he can pray all the time, pray without ceasing, and this kind of prayer comes only when we know that we may grow. This thing of praying over the same little prayer that you prayed 25 years ago, and praying nothing more this year, is death instead of growth. This thing of believing just what you believed 25 years ago, and adding nothing to your knowledge, shows that you are making no progress. Let us know that we may grow, and see with a wider vision. Let our horizon get larger and larger, not finding fault with the man that may differ from us, not finding fault with the man that knows little, but let us forever find fault with the man that is satisfied with what he knows, that never wants to go deeper into things, that never wants to see wider nor look up higher.

He taught them how to know the great subject of confession, how to confess their sins, how to believe in Christ as the great Forgiver of our sins, through faith in Him. He taught them the wonderful doctrine of the Holy Supper, how that the Lord God instituted a will and testament by which they might receive Him in, with, and under the emblems of bread and wine. He showed them how they should be faithful until death, that they might receive the crown of eternal life. He showed them how life was a battle, and that consequently every day should be nearer the victory, that they would abound more and more. A dear brother in this church said to me the other day, It does seem as if some people never want to grow; it does seem as if some people never want to know, and I believe he is right. Oh, that we all

would look at things as he does. He wants to be a better man tomorrow than he is today. He wants to grow every day more and more.

3. Know Our Enemies

Not only should we know the great law and the great Gospel, but if we want to grow we should also know our enemies.

Paul says: “Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.” Satan hindered us. Paul wasn’t running around in this world asking the question. Is there a devil? He saw too many of his footprints. When I go out in the winter and see along the fences many rabbit tracks, I know there are rabbits somewhere; and when we look around us in our homes, and all through the city, and see in the faces of men, and in our prisons, and in our hospitals, the footprints of the devil, there is no question in our minds about there being a devil, and until you notice this great fact that Satan is hindering us, you never can grow. Paul did not go wherever he wanted to go, because Satan hindered him. We learned in the Gospel lesson this morning how Satan had possession of that dear mother’s daughter and vexed her grievously. That same Satan is still on earth, and every sermon that is preached, he is trying to rob of its intention. If Satan can just draw your attention right now away from the church, he has won a great victory. If Satan can right now put you to sleep, he has won a great victory. If Satan tonight can keep you out of the house of God, he has won a great victory. If he can in this moment make you misunderstand me, he has won a great victory, and I am convinced, that nine times out of ten when men misunderstand a sermon, it is nothing in the world but that Satan is trying to hinder that sermon. Men have come to me and said, you said this and that, and I know I never said it; I know what I say; but I know, on the other hand, that there is one who can take a message and turn it and twist it in the minds of others. Let us be very careful that we do not overlook the fact that we have a great enemy, and if we do not know him, we will never grow.

And this enemy is not only the devil himself, it is the world at large. Paul recognized another enemy. “For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus; for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have

persecuted us, and they please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway, for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.” In other words, the Apostle Paul knew very well that the world is trying to fight the Church all the time, that the world is doing all it can to lead young people astray, and unless we know this, we will never grow. If you think that the First Lutheran church can prosper without a battle, you are mistaken. If you think we can keep our young people on God’s side without a battle, you are mistaken. If you think it is an easy thing to be a Christian, you are mistaken. Yes, it is an easy thing to have your name put on the church book; it is an easy thing to pay a dollar and a quarter a year and then go and serve the devil all your life; it is an easy thing to have the preacher come to see you when you are sick, and to be buried with flowers on your coffin and a few words at the grave, but it is another thing to be a child of God’ to abound more and more, to live closer to your Master, and to say to the world. Farewell forever! It is another thing to be able to say to the comrades that stand by your side, fighting the truth. You are wrong; a far different thing than to stand and smile and say, I agree with you. Child of God, stop agreeing with the world! Stop walking on the paths that are fighting the Church of God! It is time that every man of God come out on God’s side fully and wholly, and know, that you may grow.

Not only must we know the enemy, the world, but we must know the enemy, our own flesh. “For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.” Why was it necessary for Paul to write so plainly? Why was it necessary for him to say to them “That every one of you should know how’ to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor”? Because he knew that the greatest gifts that God has given to man are the very gifts that man is abusing. He knew that there was one sin that was ruining more people than possibly all the others put together. And there has been no change in history. The same thing is going on today. You say, We do not like such plain sermons. I want to tell you the pulpit is going to be responsible on the Judgment day for the damnation of many a young man and many a young woman. The truth is that some ministers are trying these very days to say something that the people cannot understand, instead of saying the things they must understand. And why should we make terms any more polite than the language of the Bible? Why should sermons in the

pulpit be any more polite than the life in the home? When young men with their names on the church book are going to destruction in bad places, it is time that the pulpit wakes up. And you will always find that the young boy and young girl are faithful to their church until they reach that age where they begin to break the sixth commandment, and then you will not find them in the church any more, and that is the sin that is ruining thousands of homes today. I have simply no respect whatever for these old bachelors living in this country among us as honorable men when we know that most of them are ungodly wretches, and are helping to damn homes and souls. I honor the unmarried lady, no difference what her age may be, but these men that will not take the responsibility of a home, that are simply standing on the corners waiting for an opportunity to step into some home and ruin it, because they are not manly enough to support a family and a home, I say God have mercy upon them, and may the time soon come that every man that has a well body and a sound mind and does not take the responsibility of a home upon him, will be looked down upon, as he ought to be. God gave him the command, and told him what his duty was. These are the sins of the times, and these are the enemies that we have got to know in order that the Church of God may grow.

II. Grow That We May Know

We not only should know that we may grow, but we ought to grow that we may know.

The little child, by its knowledge and the knowledge of its parents, is taken care of, and it grows, but just as that child grows it also gets the power of knowing more; so there is a twofold action takes place in man. He knows that he may grow, and he grows that he may know, and this lies also in our text. "So ye would abound more and more." It takes time to grow. As I said a while ago, the Apostle Paul had sent Timothy over to the Thessalonians in order that they might be better instructed, and grow better in their sanctification. He came back and reported he had discovered two sins, the ones that I have mentioned, were taking hold among the Christian people again. And so Paul said, I would like to come to you again, but Satan has hindered me and I cannot lose the time; I will write you a letter, and the result is that we have this beautiful letter, and thank God for it. We

need it today just as much as they needed it in Thessalonica, but he lost no time, and the thing we should do is to grow that we may know the value of a moment. Learn how to use our moments, and how to use our members, and how to use our money.

1. Use The Moments

First of all, that we may know how to use our moments.

When New Year's Day comes, we usually form a resolution that this year we are going to do better, but did you ever stop to think that no man can do better a year? Did you ever stop to think you cannot act in a year, nor in a month, nor in a week? Just take hold of a year and hold it. Can you? Did you ever try to grasp a month and hold it? How can I do anything thirty days in the future? How can I do anything seven days in the future? How can I do anything twenty-four hours in the future? It seems to me the time has come that we ought to grow, that we might know that the only time that is ours is the present moment. The Bible says in one place that we shall die in a moment, and the Apostle Paul said the same thing in the 15th chapter of 1 Cor., when he said that in the twinkling of an eye, in a moment, we shall be changed. Do you grasp the idea? My dear friends, did you ever try to divide a moment? A moment is like the point of a needle. Did you ever try to split the point of a needle? Can you do it? This present moment – what am I doing with it? It is God's, and if it is God's moment what right have I to try to divide it? It seems to me that we ought to grow until we know that every moment is God's, and that it absolutely cannot be divided, and therefore, must be given to Him. No man is a thorough Christian who does not realize what I am trying to impress upon you this moment, that our time is absolutely God's and should be given to Him; and when you give it, you cannot hold it; it is His. Ask yourself the question, not how did I spend yesterday, nor how did I spend last year, but how did I spend every moment every day when that moment was mine, and given over to God? Oh, these precious moments! how we have misspent them. Claimed them as our own, when they were God's! The value of a moment is seen when we study the history of great men. Luther's life was a wonderful life, but the greatness of that life lay in a moment – in that moment when he stood before kings and before enemies, and said, "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise. God help me!" It was that moment that made Luther great. You say, I remember a

certain sermon, and it made a wonderful impression on me. 'Was it the sermon? Was it? I do not think it was. I think it was one thought in that sermon; it was one moment in that sermon that made the impression. The great things of the world have not been done in hours; the hours have passed by until God reaches a certain moment, and in that moment he struck an impression that all eternity can never erase.

2. Use Your Physical Body

Grow not only that you may know the use of moments, but grow that you may know how to use your members.

“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor.” His vessel. What is meant by that? Commentators have given us two different answers to that question. Some have said it is the body of the Christian which is the vessel in which God has placed his soul, and that this body itself should be possessed in sanctification. Others have said this vessel refers to the spouse of the husband, or the wife, that the wife is the vessel of the husband, as the husband is the vessel of the wife, and that therefore they should live a life of sanctification with all their bodies. I believe that if the apostle Paul had meant body, he would have said body. I believe that the inspired writer said just exactly what the Holy Spirit wanted him to say. It is not popular to mention such things in the pulpit, but, my friends, you understand that when God said vessel, he means vessel, that every one of you should know to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor. It is time that we grow until we know that we must not only sanctify our hands and our feet, and our brain, but especially those parts of the body that are too delicate to mention, and yet so sacred that God uses them to give to the world the human race, – sanctification of the whole man. And it does seem to me that the time has come that we ought to grow until we know that there is not a bone in the body, nor a nerve in the body, nor a particle that should not be thoroughly consecrated to Jesus Christ. If people understood what I am trying to say, how differently they would act. As long as these hands are considered by myself as my hands, I will do with them what I would do, but just as soon as I recognize that these hands shall be given to Jesus Christ, I will only do with them what Jesus Christ would do. Men go and visit each other in the

evening – professed Christians – and they sit around the table with the old euchre deck in their hands, and say. Now I have a hand. Yes, you have got a hand. Whose is it? Whose hand is it, that is the question. If it is your hand, play. If it is Christ’s hand, drop it. You go to the dance and to the public hall and say, I am a virtuous girl, or I am a pure minded man, and I can go there and pray if it is necessary, and can live a virtuous life, but, dear friends, you do know that about two-thirds of all the boys and girls that have ever been ruined, have started on the ball room floor, and if you can go there with your own feet, go and dance, but if you think you can go there and dance with the feet of Jesus Christ, try it. Now, try it. A man can go and live an ungodly life just as long as his body is considered his own, but it is never his own. “Ye are not your own.” My body this very moment belongs to Jesus Christ or it belongs to the devil. If it is the devil’s, let the devil do with it what he pleases; if it is God’s, then I want to do with it just what God would have me do. That is plain. You are not your own. You have got no more right to do with yourself as you please, than you have to say, Here, devil, take me and do what you please. So it seems to me the question is not so much, dare I do this, or dare I do that, as the other question, am I Christ’s or am I not? Have I consecrated my body, my vessel, to Jesus Christ, or have I not?

3. Use Your Money

We should not only know how to use our members better, but we also ought to grow that we might know how to use our money better.

“That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter; because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.” Ever since the world has existed, and sin has come into the world, men have become selfish. In their selfishness they have tried not only to ruin other families by the sin mentioned before, but they have also tried to gain possession of things without giving an equivalent. As a result, we find many people calling themselves professed Christians who have gone out among their fellow men and have robbed them of that which they can never return. Let all those people remember that there is a God who is the avenger of all such; remember that there is a God who said. Thou shalt not steal. The man that does not take care of his money and look upon that money as

a gift of God to be used to His glory, does not understand what growth in sanctification means. It seems to me that the money question is one that we ought to study more from a Scriptural standpoint. Do you mean to say, says some one, that I cannot take my own and use it for myself? That is just what I mean – just exactly what I mean. I claim that I have no more right to use that hand for myself, or that foot for myself, or my money for myself, than I have to use anything else for myself. Why, you say, how will you get anything to eat, how will you get anything to wear, or to clothe your family if you do not take your money and use it for yourself? My dear friend, that is very easily answered. All that you have and all that I have, by the act of consecration and sanctification belongs to God, and then, when I give it to my God, He appoints me to use it, not for myself but on myself, just as He expects me to use it on other things. Do not forget, my friend, that you, yourself, are an object of your own care just as much as anything else is, and when God puts money into your hands, you are His steward. It is all His. The silver and the gold are Mine, saith the Lord, and I appoint you now as steward, and while taking care of that stewardship, do not forget yourself; whenever you need clothing, buy it; whenever you need something to eat or to drink, buy those things; if you need a home to live in, buy it; if you need a little fund to take care of you in your old age, keep it; do not use it for yourself, but on yourself. It is Mine. And just as you use this fund of God's on yourself, use it on other things. You must use this gold on God's poor. Remember, my friends, that God has a church He purchased with His blood, and remember that that church needs funds as well as your own families. We are standing before the threshold of a new financial year in the First Lutheran Church. What are you going to do this coming year? Sit at home and say, the church is out of debt and we will do less than we did before? Has God helped you to get less than you were getting before? Are your wages smaller than they were before? Hasn't God been saying, abound more and more? Are we going to grow or go backward?

Just look around and see the things we need; see whether we need money enough to balance up the treasury to date, and then stop and think what we will need throughout the coming year. We ought to have a bell on the church of God to call the little children in, so that they are not playing on the street when they ought to be listening to God's Word. We ought to have a fund that can go out and do good work among the poor. We need

some of God's gifts to carry on the mission in our own city. We need some of God's gifts to carry on the appropriation due to the great church of God at large. Wherever we look, God has need for those things. Are we going to do less, or more? Let us be careful that we do not let our church run in debt again. We have a great work here, and let us all do more this year than we have ever done before. Let us grow and abound more and more, but remember, after all, these are God's gifts and not ours.

I wish I had time to show you how we should consecrate ourselves entirely to the Lord and Master. Oh, may the Holy Spirit help us this morning that we may know, that we may grow, and that we may grow that we may know. I will conclude what I have to say by quoting a beautiful little poem which I found this week:

Take my life and let it be
Consecrated. Lord, to Thee.

Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful, for Thee.

Take my voice and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.

Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold;
Not a mite would I withhold.

Take my intellect and use
Every power as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it Thine;
It shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart; it is Thine own;
It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love, my God, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store.

Take myself and I will be
Ever, only all for Thee.

AMEN.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee in this hour for Thy precious Word, so clear and so plain that we may not only see the things that we should know, but learn how we should grow. We ask Thee then that Thou wilt help us to make diligent use of Thy Word and the Holy Sacraments, that the Holy Spirit may work in us according to His will. We pray Thee that Thou wilt help us all to consecrate ourselves, body and soul entirely to Thee and to Thy service. Help us to ask ourselves the question today, what are we doing for Thee, O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world. Heavenly Father accept us now, and lead us in paths selected by Thee, and keep us in the center of those paths, and over hill and dale, until we get behind the veil, let us sing that prayerful song which Thou hast taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

21. Three Classes Of Children.

Third Sunday In Lent.

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.) Eph. 5:1-9.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

LIFE IS TOO SHORT and our knowledge too limited ever to think that we are beyond childhood. When people have passed the strong days of their lives and are going down the hill toward the Jordan, we sometimes say they have become childish. It seems to me that the oldest people in the world have lived such a short time that we have a perfect right to address them in the face of eternity as children. And when we compare that which we know with that which we do not know, surely we are always little children. Sometimes in the Word of God the Holy Spirit speaks of little children in distinction from older people, and sometimes He addresses all children of God as dear children. If you have noticed the reading of my text carefully you have found there are three classes of children mentioned here, and it is to these three classes that I now invite your attention, and may you as you sit before me this evening find yourselves surely in the second class, and

also grow into the third; and may God, the Holy Spirit, prevent you staying in the first class if you should be there.

Three Classes Of Children

- I. The children damned.
- II. The children delivered.
- III. The children dear.

I. Lost Children

There are some children that are lost.

“For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience” (or, better translated, the children of unbelief).

Now if such people as are mentioned in my text and in the verse just quoted shall have no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God, pray tell me, where shall they dwell in all eternity? And if the wrath of God shall rest upon them, what are they but children damned? Who are these children damned? Whoremongers, unclean persons, covetous people – all a result of unbelief. Look at it as you will, every crime in the world is a direct child of unbelief. On the great Judgment Day the question will not be asked, did you kill? did you murder? did you steal? did you lie? for all these things are only the children of a mother that will be mentioned. He that believeth not shall be damned. Why? Because unbelief is the mother of all uncleanness. Let a man confess to me that he does not believe in Christ, and it is only another step to show him that he does not believe in the Bible; it is only another step to show that he does not believe in the true and living God, and only another to show that he does not believe in a Judgment to come, and to show that that man, if it is necessary, will do anything mean and low if the law does not catch him, for his own selfish ends. In other words, unbelief is the mother of all sin, and is the damning sin, and from this mother are born such illegitimate children as whoremongers, unclean persons and covetous people.

1. Why Mention Them So Often?

Someone might say, why mention these people so often? Dear friends, when you read these epistles of Paul carefully, you will find that it was the crime and the sin among all the nations addressed, and it would be just as true today. If the Apostle Paul were to write a letter to the Clevelanders, and to the Cincinnatians, and to the Columbusites, or to the Chicagoans, he would have to speak of these same sins that he did when he wrote to the Ephesians and to the Thessalonians and to the Romans. A whoremonger is a man that will do anything to ruin families; he is a man that has no faith in God; he is a man that does not care if he does pollute the family altar; he does not care if he does ruin your wife, your sister, your daughter; he is the meanest man in any community, and that man will never enter the kingdom of God in the condition in which he is. I hope there are no such children sitting before me tonight.

But let us not for a single moment imagine there is only one commandment in the world that makes a man unclean. "Nor unclean persons," it is said here. We all acknowledge that the man that has no respect for the family, and for virtue, is a thoroughly bad man, but how about the man that does not know who the true and living God is? How about the man that curses and swears? How about the man that does not keep the Sabbath Day holy? How about the man that does not treat his aged father and mother as he ought? How about the man that will take a dollar that is not his own? How about the man that will lie in order to make a bargain? How about the man that will covet that which belongs to his neighbor? My friends, I am afraid we are overlooking the fact that one commandment in God's sight is just as precious as the other, and there are people that are disobeying the third commandment all the time that are called respectable, and in God's sight they are just as mean and low as a dirty whoremonger. A man has no right to do as he pleases on the Sabbath day. A man has no right to treat his father and mother as he pleases, unless he pleases to treat them rightly. A man has no right to curse and damn just because he is angry; he is guilty, and just as long as a man has sin in him, willful sin, and does not try to keep the commandments, so long he is an unclean person, and an unclean person shall never enter the kingdom of heaven. That is certain as God's Word is true.

It is just as true of a covetous man. Oh, how we pat some men on the back when they have a big bank account, and big house and yard, and a great many farms, and are rich, and we say, that man has made a success; and the probability is that he has made a success to go right to hell; that is what he has done. What is a covetous man? “For this ye know that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.” He is an idolater, a worshiper of false gods. I have a thousand times more respect for the poor Indian that worships the sun, than for a man that will get down before 160 acres of dirt and worship it; a thousand times more respect for the man that worships the unknown god on Mars’ hill, than for the man that will run over his bank account year after year, gloat over the swelling account, and refuse to help the poor and the needy. I say that man is an idolater of the worst kind. How often we take a man into church discipline when he commits this wrong or that wrong, but he can be an idolater and we pat him on the back, and when he gives two or three dollars, just about as much as the poor wash-woman, we pat him on the back and are thankful that we got them from the rascal that is going straight to hell, and we know it. He shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. The great Gaspare said one time of an idolater that he has four rules by which he will stand: The first is. Forget God, lest I be converted; the second is, Forget my neighbors, my friends, my good old father and mother, lest I might do an act of charity; the third is, Forget my conscience and my soul, lest I might change my mind; and the fourth is. Forget death and the Judgment and hell fire, lest I go crazy. That is a great theologian’s definition of a covetous man. Yes, he does not want to think of God, or he might yet be converted; he is an idolater; he wants to forget his fellow men entirely, lest he might do some little kind act; he wants to forget his conscience and his soul lest he might yet change his mind and give up his little God; he must not think of death; it makes him shiver; he will not go to a funeral, for fear he might die. Oh, if there is anything he despises to hear, it is of the Judgment and of hell fire, for he knows he will go there. And so, rather than lose his mind, he bows down before his dirty dollars and worships them, and for him there is no room in the kingdom of heaven. That is the first class of children mentioned in our text tonight. Around all of them you will find one common band, one label – unbelievers in Christ!

II. Children Of Light

There is a second class of children spoken of in this text:

“Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.”

Dear children are called *children of light*. They have been delivered from darkness unto light, and this deliverance has been to goodness, righteousness and truth. Oh, what a wonderful thing it is to be delivered from the natural life to the Spiritual, from total darkness to the light of salvation! What a great delivery it is for a man to come out from the bondage of Satan and the world, and his own flesh, into the glorious liberty of children of God. The Truth shall make you free, said Jesus. When the Son shall make you free, then you shall be free indeed. What a glorious liberty therefore it is for one to be delivered from darkness to light, from darkness to the light of goodness! When God takes a child of Satan and makes him a child of His own, He makes him a good child, and the desire of that child is to do good, because God has been so good to him. Let us not boast of our goodness, but when we have been delivered from darkness, let us remember that as delivered children we have before us this mind, how can I do good, and where can I do good? What a glorious life it is when men have that in their minds! What a glorious city Mansfield would be if every man and every woman and every child would constantly look about and ask the question, what good thing can I do today, and where can I find something good to do this hour? And there is so much to do everywhere – so many opportunities are given to make the world better! How much good it does sometimes to help a man in a time of need, and to take his hand just when he feels despondent and hardly knows what to do the next hour, meet him with a smile and a God bless you and help you today! Brethren, let us be children of light, delivered from darkness to the glorious liberty of light.

1. Strive To Be Delivered From Darkness

And not only should we strive to do better and be kinder every day, but also strive as children of light to be delivered from darkness to the light of righteousness. For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness. The Lord Jesus Christ is righteous. As we heard this morning. He is full of grace and truth. He is a fountain that always runs over, is always waiting to cover us with His righteousness. He finds us poor, lost, condemned, helpless sinners, and when we lie there like a worm, helpless, He picks us up and says, the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost! And when He picks us up, He puts His garment of Righteousness on us, and clothes us carefully with that white garment of Righteousness, and then, when we have that garment on, a question comes into our minds, and we never can get away from it; it comes to our minds in the morning when we get up; it is in our minds at noon, and in the evening, and that question is always this. Is it right? The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, and out of that path the child delivered from darkness to light never can stray, except he says. Lord, lead me back. I want to do right because Thou hast covered me with Thy righteousness!

2. To The Great Light of Truth

The child delivered not only comes back from darkness to the great light of goodness, and to the great light of righteousness, but to the great light of truth. Christ said of Satan that he is the father of lies. Christ said of Himself, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. There is as much difference between being lost, and being saved, as there is between darkness and light. There is as much difference between being lost and saved as there is between hell and heaven, as there is between Satan and Christ. Satan is the father of lies. Christ is the Truth. And when we are delivered from darkness to light, the question will arise every day, how can I tell the truth better than I have been telling it? A man absolutely cannot love lies and be a child of God. I believe one of the hardest things in the world for a man to do, is to tell the exact truth every time, under all circumstances. How many people there are who think an exaggeration is all right. It is a lie, and nothing but a lie; it comes from Satan and from darkness, and not from God. Truth does not vary one

iota from that which is exactly true, and that should be our aim, as children delivered.

In one sense there is only one way of delivering us from darkness to light, and that is through the cross of Christ. It is said of a certain married woman who had been living in adultery with a single man, that her conscience one time was awakened and she made up her mind that that kind of a life must now cease. She took from the wall of her own home a picture of the Crucifixion of Christ and laid it down before the door of her parlor, and then, when the door was opened and the young man was about to step in, he started back and said, "What means this picture on the floor?" She said, "Step right on it, and come in." "I will never do it," said he. "Yes, but you and I have been stepping on Christ and Him crucified for years, and I made up my mind that if you ever came into this house again you have got to step right on that Crucifixion." He stepped back and never entered. He turned his attention to Christ and Him crucified, gave his heart to God, and asked Him to make him clean; and the wife from that day on proved to be true to her husband and family, and lived a clean life. Brethren, there is absolutely no hope and no help except Christ and Him crucified for a dying world.

III. The Third Class of Children

These children delivered belong in a certain sense to the third class, which I shall now mention. In one sense there are only two classes of people; they are lost or saved; they are in darkness or light, but there is a difference between being delivered, and growing in grace, and consequently there is still a third class, *the dear children*:

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an Offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it be not once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks."

As I was reading this text over and over, meditating on it and praying over it throughout the past week, I wondered whether any of us belong to the third class or not. I do know that there are many children delivered, but how many of the delivered children are dear children? How many Christians are

there today who walk as Christ walked; who talk as Christ talked; who thank as Christ thanked? “And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.”

1. How Christ Walked

Did you ever notice how Christ walked? He walked for thirty-three years on this earth with the special intention of walking up to Calvary's hill, and there with bleeding feet pour out His life's blood for you and me because He loved us. He walked from heaven above, where all things were His, and lay down on earth without a pillow, slept in a borrowed grave, that He might make us rich. How many children of God today are dear children, that are actually willing to suffer for the Word's sake and for their salvation? How many of us are living a life of sacrifice? We sing about missions. We sing that we will go where Christ wants us to go, and we will do what Christ wants us to do, but how many of us are willing, if necessary, to wear the home spun that we may help bring the Gospel to the ends of the world? How many of us are willing to take the little idol of money and consecrate it to God until we feel it? I do not believe one of us feels what we are doing. It does seem to me that there is a Christianity which is very strange to us Christians. It does seem to me that there is a life for a Christian that is away above your preacher, away above the average Christian. I am not sure but that it is above all of them. Where is the man on earth that is walking as Christ walked?

2. How Christ Talked

Where is the man on earth that is talking as Christ talked? Christ said some things that were very funny. When He pictures a man, the old Pharisee, walking up to a little water or wine and finding a little gnat, then pouring that water or wine through a sieve or strainer, in order that he might not touch the gnat, and then, on the other hand, pictures that same Pharisee trying to swallow down a great big camel, hump and all, it makes one laugh. When the Lord Jesus Christ pictures to us the old Pharisee standing before us with a large beam sharpened and run into one eye, and through his head, and the other end down on the ground like a log, trying to pick a little

mote out of his neighbor's eye, if that were found in Puck it would make us laugh; but where do you ever find Christ saying a foolish thing? where do you ever find Christ sitting down and gloating over fornication, talking about bad people as if it were a joke? where do you ever find Him saying anything that was not for the bettering of humanity. We are taught as dear children, as follows: "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints." In other words, we are to so live that these things are so foreign to us that they never enter into our conversation. "Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient." Did you ever analyze a joke carefully? Did you ever notice they never seem very funny unless they are a little bit filthy? And did you ever notice that things are not real funny unless they approach the sacred? Do you know why the theater loves to have such a theme as "Our Pastor?" Because the devil always makes a thing look funny if it just concerns the preacher, and if you will notice the joke books carefully, and the funny conversations, you will notice that nine times out of ten it takes a certain amount of sinning to make the people laugh. Where are the Christians that are keeping up on that plane where God wants them today? Stop saying things that Jesus Christ would not say! I do not know of any text that I have preached on for a year that makes me feel more humble and more sinful than this text tonight. There isn't a week that this text does not push me down from the dear children to the children delivered, and let us beware that we are not pushed down to the children of darkness.

3. How Christ Was Thankful

How many of us here tonight are thankful as Christ was thankful? When there were only five loaves of bread and two fishes among all that vast multitude, He thanked the Father in heaven. It made no difference where He was, He looked heavenward with thankful eyes. When He stood by the grave of Lazarus, His best friend, He thanked His Father in heaven. How many of you have stood by the graves of your dear ones and thanked God in heaven? How many of us are thankful as Paul was thankful? I am preaching tonight for the sole purpose of bringing those that are in darkness into light, those that are out of the kingdom of God into the kingdom of God, those delivered from darkness into the light of great kindness and goodness, righteousness and truth; my purpose is to lead those that are delivered into

the higher life, and may we tonight, by the help of God, strive to get up on the high plane, into another mansion of God's great house. Let not your hearts be troubled, ye 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. I go to prepare a place for you, and then I will come again and take you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. When you walk with Christ you walk from mansion to mansion; when you talk as Christ talked, you go from mansion to mansion; when you thank as Christ thanked, you go from mansion to mansion, and thus you will be led, as one who can occupy only a little space, into the great universe of God.

In conclusion, let us become true to the King of heaven. It is said of a certain Prussian officer, that when he fell on the battlefield and was sorely wounded, Pastor Woerth came along and saw him; he saw the blood oozing from the newly struck wound; he saw the heaving breast; he saw the pale lips and the cold sweat on his face, and the glazing eyes; he saw there was life in him, and he bowed down in sympathy, and said, "Dear officer of the army, how are you getting along?" And with his dying breath he said, "I am always getting along well when I go where the king sends me," and in a few moments he went home to the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Oh, may God help us tonight, whatever our trials are, wherever we are sent, whatever befalls us, let us be happy in Him, realizing that we are always getting along well when we go where the King sends us. Amen.

(Congregation, led by pastor, repeats in concert the Apostles' Creed:)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell; on the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer

Our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the blessing of the hour. We thank Thee for this eternal epistle written by Thy great servant, Paul. And we pray Thee, O God, that this message of the Holy Spirit may tonight take hold of our hearts and our souls and show us the difference between children damned and children delivered, and the other difference between children delivered and the children made dear. Do Thou help, heavenly Father, that our aim in life may be to walk in the foot-prints of our Savior, that we may talk as He talked, and thank as He thanked, and while we are now in the center of His footprints, may we pray the prayer which He so graciously taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

22. An Allegory. Fourth Sunday In Lent.

Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that barest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. Gal. 4:21-31.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in the Lord:

DR. LUTHER AT ONE TIME SAID that he is a true Doctor of Divinity who is able to distinguish between the law and the Gospel. The law is the covenant of our God with regard to the duty that man has to Him and to his fellow men. The Gospel is the glad tidings that Jesus Christ has come into the world to save sinners, and through faith to make them forever blessed. It would seem at first sight that it is a very easy matter to distinguish between law and Gospel, but the great truth is this, that the people in this world are always confounding the one with the other. There are few people who know exactly whether such and such a verse in the Bible is law, or whether it is Gospel. If I were to ask the question this morning, is this law or Gospel: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," I will dare say ninety per cent, of all Christians would say that it is Gospel, and yet it is all law. "Blessed are

the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” I said a moment ago the Gospel is the good news that Jesus Christ has come into the world to save sinners and through faith to make them forever blessed, and you might say, isn’t that good news, that blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God? Yes, that would be good news if you and I were pure in heart. Is it good news to the colored man to say that the white man is free? Is that any comfort to a man whose skin is black? Is that any comfort to you and me to know that the pure in heart shall see God, when we are not pure? The law demands perfection. The law demands purity, and without purity the law will give salvation to no man. If you were perfect, you would not need a Savior. If you were perfect, you would not need Christ and Him crucified. If you were perfect, you could be saved by the law. Now the people in Galatia were under Jewish influences, and although Paul had preached to them the pure Gospel of grace, half the time they did not know whether they were under the law or under the grace, constantly becoming confused on these two great truths. God is the author of the law and the author of the Gospel, but the law condemns and the Gospel brings salvation. Great as is the difference, they are united in God, united in love, and it is a blessed thing when we are able to distinguish the one from the other. In order that the people might be clear on this great subject, the apostle Paul goes back to Old Testament history and gives them the story of Abraham, of Sarah, of Isaac and of Ishmael and Hagar, and through these different personages tries to make clear to them the great difference between the law and the Gospel. “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory.” I desire by the help of the Holy Spirit this morning to present to you

An Allegory

An allegory is one thing described under the picture of another, and may you this morning get a distinction as you never did before between the law and the Gospel by studying the family of Abraham. With regard to this allegory, I would say.

I. Abraham Represents God

That Abraham represents God. Abraham was most intimately related to his whole family. He was the dear husband of Sarah; he was the dear master of Hagar; he was the dear father of Isaac and he was the dear father of Ishmael, and there was the most intimate relation between Abraham and all of these personages. Abraham loved Sarah, he loved Hagar, he loved Isaac and he loved Ishmael.

Just so there is a most intimate relation between God, and the law, and the Gospel. God gave us the law. He wrote it on the heart of Adam. God wrote the law with His own finger and gave it to Moses on Mount Sinai. God's love runs through every commandment. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength, and your neighbor as yourself. You can see at once that the same relation obtains between God and the Ten Commandments as existed between Abraham and his family.

Not only is it true that God loves the law, and is the author of it, but he is also the author of the Gospel. It is said by a great theologian that the redemption of Jesus Christ and the doctrine of grace was the greatest discovery that was ever made. Only God could have made that discovery for us, that man might be saved, solely by grace. The law comes and says, man, if you keep me perfectly, I will save you. God says, man, if you keep my law perfectly by thought, word and deed. If you are sinless, heaven is yours. It is a covenant between God and man, and between the law and man. Not so with regard to the Gospel. The Gospel is a covenant that God makes with Jesus Christ. He says, My Son, if Thou wilt fulfill the law for Me, if thou wilt go down on earth and become man, and put Thyself under the law, and suffer death instead of humanity, as if Thou wert guilty; if Thou then wilt ask the people to come unto Thee, those that labor and are heavy laden, and Thou wilt give them rest; if Thou wilt accept them by faith, then I will accept them as if they were Thou alone. In other words, the covenant of the Gospel is between God and Jesus Christ for the salvation of poor sinners alone by grace. These are the two covenants. God loves the one just as He loves the other, the same as Abraham loved his whole family.

II. Sarah Represents The Gospel

This allegory represents Sarah as the Gospel. She was Abraham's original wife. Hagar was only a handmaid. The Gospel is older than the law. You might ask a great many people which is the older. Why, they would say, didn't God write the law on Adam's heart, and wasn't the Gospel promised in the garden of Eden after Adam sinned? Oh, dear friends, long before there was a law written in the heart of Adam, God carried us in Jesus Christ, before the foundation of the world was laid, and as far as the written law is concerned, long before God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses, we were to be saved as a race by the promise of the seed of the woman that should crush the serpent's head. Just as Sarah was the only and original wife of Abraham, the Gospel is older than the law, and the Gospel is God's plan to save the world.

Again, it can be said of Sarah that she never was a slave, never was a bondwoman. So it is with the Gospel. The Gospel never asked a man to put himself under law and be a slave. The Gospel never said, do this and thou shalt be saved. The Gospel said, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Sarah never was a slave and she never became one. The Gospel never made slaves, and wants all people to be children of liberty.

Again, we find that Sarah was extremely beautiful. When Abraham went down to Egypt the king was bound to take her for his own wife, not knowing that she was the wife of Abraham, and very much disappointed was he when he learned that it would be impossible to have Sarah as the queen. She was represented as one of the most beautiful of women, and the very name suggests that she was lovely in looks and in character. Just so it is with regard to the Gospel. How beautiful are the feet of them that publish the Gospel of peace! There isn't anything more beautiful in all the world than the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the sweetest news that man has ever heard on earth. There is nothing so pleasant, nothing so beautiful as the message of peace. Let man feel the weight of his sins and the curse of God resting upon him, and oh, how beautiful it is to hear the voice, Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. When you feel that the curse of God ought to rest upon us, when we feel as if we ought to be going down deeper and deeper under the awful burden that is holding us down, when we feel that God Himself certainly can never forgive us, then it is that we see the beauty in that beautiful invitation. Him

that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out. Oh, beautiful Sarah! Beautiful Gospel of Christ!

Again we find that it took a long time before Sarah could have the child of promise. When the promise was first given to Abraham that the seed of Sarah should multiply and become like the stars in the heavens and the sands of the sea, they laughed for joy. Time passed on, year after year, and no son in the family. After ten years had passed by, Sarah became despondent and urged upon her own husband that at least half of the family might be represented, that he should take Hagar, and thereby bring into the family a son. This was fourteen years before Isaac was born. Ishmael was fourteen years old when the promised seed came into the world. Oh, how long, how long it took before Abraham could look into the face of the promised son, Isaac!

There we have a picture again of the Gospel. There are islands in the South seas where the Gospel was preached for twelve long years before there was a single convert. We have instances in mission work where the Gospel was preached and preached and preached, by men that lived and died in the field, before there was a single soul confessed Christ, but all at once it was announced that a certain king became a Christian, or possibly only a little child accepted Christ, and in a short time the island was covered with Christians. So, my dear friends, we have a picture again of Sarah. Just as she had to wait and wait until the promised son was born, just so we have got to labor and pray and toil with some people before they will ever accept Christ. Oh, let us not grow impatient because there is some one in the family who is putting these things off day after day. I know it is a sad condition. I know it is a long year to wait for little Isaac when he was promised long ago, but just have a little patience. The Gospel of Christ is just like Sarah, sometimes very slow to bring forth Isaac, but remember, my friends, that Isaac today has enough followers in the world, that they are like the sands of the sea, and like the stars in the heavens, as God promised. Here is the allegory that Sarah, as the wife of Abraham, is the representative of the Gospel of Christ.

III. Hagar Represents The Law

On the other hand, Hagar represents the law. She is pictured here in our text as a bondmaid, and as a slave, as one whose very name, Hagar, means Arabia, Mount Sinai, or the law. She was a handmaid and she always remained a handmaid. Never could Hagar say truthfully that she was the wife of Abraham. She was not an equal with Sarah, but she was in the same home, a servant, waiting and helping Abraham and his wife, Sarah.

Just so, my dear friends, it is with the law. God never intended that the law should be the wife. The law is the schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. The law is the servant that shall open to us our sins and shall show us our misery and hold down to us our condemnation, and make us feel our guilt, and make us cry out, What shall I do? and then, as a handmaid, she takes us and leads us to the cross of Calvary, leads us into the home of Sarah, leads us back to Abraham, and shows us the home of the Gospel. As long as the world stands, therefore, the law will be only a handmaid and not the wife.

Again, you will notice that although Sarah was the wife and Hagar was the handmaid, she bore the first child. Ishmael was born when Isaac had been promised ten years. In other words, he was born fourteen years before Isaac was. There, again, you have a picture of the law. The law has always got more children than the Gospel. The law always brings forth the family first. Every one of you were a legalist before you were a true Christian. The world today is full of legalists. Wherever you look you will find the moralist that wants to be saved by his goodness, wants to be saved because he is so good and so much better than everybody else. When that Pharisee stood in the temple and thanked God that he was so much better than the poor publican, there you have a picture of the law's birth of a legalist. The world, I say, is full of these legalists today, and every man's own history shows that he is first an Ishmael before he becomes an Isaac. It is one of the hardest things for the Christian fully to settle, that he is saved alone by grace. That is the second birth, not the first. "Every man," said Whitefield, "is born an Arminian." We might just as well truthfully say every man is born a moralist, a legalist, a Pharisee, and not until you get fully rid of self-righteousness can you be born an Isaac, a child of promise.

Again, we find that Hagar was always a slave, just as Sarah was always a true wife and never a slave. Hagar, on the contrary, was always a slave and never became a true wife. The law of God has always been making slaves, and always will. There are just as many people today trying to be slaves by the law as before; they are under bondage; they have no peace of

conscience; they have no faith that will give them peace wherever they go. They are happy one day and depressed the next. Instead of trusting alone in the blood of Jesus Christ, they trust themselves. One day they think they are living just about right, and the next day everything is wrong, and the consequence is that you can drive them out at four o'clock in the morning to go to church and hear the mass; you can drive them to the house of God for forty days and forty nights; you can make them stand in the snow as one man in Europe did before the Pope for days, trying to get forgiveness. When a man is a slave you can make him do anything. The question arises, why cannot the Protestant Church build temples and hospitals and all these expensive buildings that the Roman Catholic Church can? The difference is simply this: Isaac is a free man and never can be forced to do what Ishmael, the slave, can. Hagar, slave, is a servant, and you can drive the servant with a stick. The legalist, consequently, is always a slave; always in thralldom.

We find Hagar not only was always a slave, but she was a representative of Sinai, itself. We are told here in this Word: "Which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount of Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children." In other words, in the land of Arabia Mount Sinai is called Agar, and Agar in our language means a rock, a rough-toothed rock, which as Sinai, was where God gave the law to Moses. She being a true representative of Mount Sinai is a true representative of the Ten Commandments, always in bondage, asking of the world to do this and to do that to be saved, but never able to offer salvation itself, only an handmaid to lead us to Christ.

IV. Ishmael Represents The Legalist

In this allegory you will please notice, furthermore, that Ishmael represents the legalist. As Sarah represents the Gospel and Hagar represents the law, so Ishmael, as a son of Hagar, represents the legalist, the moralist, while on the other hand, Isaac, as a child of Sarah, represents the true Christian.

With regard to Ishmael, we will notice that he had a good father. Ishmael had the same father that Isaac had, and yet what a difference! So you will recognize at once that the same law that had God for its Father, also shows

us the Father of the Gospel. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. That same God said: I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other gods before Me. Just as these two little boys, both in the same home, could look into the same face and both say "Father" at the same time, so the law on the one hand and the Gospel on the other, can look up into the face of God and say "My Father."

Ishmael not only had a good father, but he appeared the same as the real son. If a stranger had gone into the home of Abraham and had seen those two boys he would have thought they are real brothers. Both were circumcised; both said "father" to Abraham; both of them ate at the same table; both of them looked as if they belonged to the same family, and yet there was a world wide difference, for one was a son of the wife, and the other was a son of Hagar, the bondwoman; the one was a free child and the other was a slave; yet, I say, in appearance, you could not tell the difference, and in many of their forms you could not tell the difference. Just so it is with regard to the legalist today. There are men under the law instead of under the Gospel, that go to church just as well as Christians do. They are careful about their language. You cannot tell from their general appearance but what they are the best of Christians, but all this time they are under the law, they are under bondage, and though they appear like the best of Christians, they are no Christians at all.

We find in examining this history closely that Ishmael, at the age of fourteen, when the little brother, Isaac, was having a great festival day on account of a certain age, this older boy stood and mocked the weaker boy. In other words, Ishmael, the strong boy of fourteen, mocks the little child just weaned by the mother on that great festival day. There you have a picture of the legalist. The legalist is always finding fault with the church member; he is always finding fault with the one that is under grace. The legalist always looks as if he were the strongest man in the world; he looks big and large as if he were far above the little child of promise. The legalist stands out before the world and says, See what I do! Watch my walk! Look at my strength, and then look at the confessed Christian, how weak and how little he is! It always has been so, that the legalist, the Ishmael, mocks the little weak Christian.

Not only do we find that he is a mocker, but we find furthermore, that he could not be an heir and must be cast out. When that day came that Ishmael

mocked Isaac, then Sarah arose as the mother of the home and said to Abraham, This thing has gone just far enough; Hagar despises me, your wife, because she has got the big, strong boy, and that strong boy despises our little Isaac; the time has come that you must let them know that Isaac is the only heir; the time has come that you must take Ishmael and his mother and lead them out away from this home; from today on there shall, be a separation. It hurt the father, Abraham. He loved little Ishmael; he loved Hagar, but the wife had the right in the home, and so he gathers up some bread and some water and puts it into the bottle made of skin in those days, laid that upon their shoulders and started them out into the wilderness. In other words, they were not heirs; they were cast out. And just so, my friends, it will be with every legalist, no difference where he may be. The man that puts himself under the law instead of under the Gospel, has no peace, has no salvation, is not a child of promise, and the day will come when that man must be led away from God, on the Judgment Day, he must be cast out where there is no water; he must suffer as little Ishmael was suffering when the angel of God came and saved him from death.

V. Isaac Represents The True Christian

In this allegory we find, finally, that Isaac represents the true Christian. Isaac was miraculously born. Sarah had reached that age where she had no right to expect a son, but God came and promised that in a certain time she should bring forth a son, and that this son should be the father of a great multitude. Time passed on. This little child was born. His was a miraculous birth, and from that day forth he was to represent the new birth of every Christian. You and I can be born into this world, and by being born into it we can see it, and can walk in it, but only by being born miraculously from on high can we ever enter the kingdom of heaven and become heirs. So, then, we have here a picture of the Gospel that offers us the grace of regeneration, the new birth, as miraculous as the birth of little Isaac.

We find, furthermore, he was a child of promise. As I said, God came and promised this son twenty-five years before he was born, and when he was born they had the assurance that this is the child that God promised so long ago. On the day of Pentecost, when Peter preached that great sermon, he said, "Arise and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus

Christ, for the remission of sin, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and this promise is to you and to your children.” There you find what a Christian is. He is a child of promise. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Oh, wonderful promise given to the children of God!

Furthermore, we find that Isaac was the only heir. When Abraham passed away, all that he had passed over into the hands of his only son, Isaac. And just so with the Christian. Though he may seem to be poor; though he at times may have no home of his own, he is nevertheless very, very rich. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Oh, what riches for the child of God! “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved!” What more can we ask than to have salvation? Ye shall receive the crown of eternal life. Ye shall be the only heirs.

Another beautiful thought we have in regard to Isaac is this, that he never left home; he was never cast out. As long as the father and mother lived, no one was more welcome than the little son, Isaac. Never did he have to take the bread and the water and dwell in the wilderness. He slept at home; stayed at home, and he is today yet at home with his Father in heaven. Thus you have a picture of the true Christian. The Lord accepts you as His child by grace; He takes you as His own; He takes you into the covenant which He never will break, nor do you need to break it. Be thou faithful unto death and I will receive thee, and thou shalt receive the crown of eternal life. Be thou faithful through death. He that endureth unto the end shall be saved.

Now, dear friends, the question arises today, Will you be a child of promise, or will you be a slave? Will you try to live under the law or under the Gospel? Will you live under the covenant of the law or the covenant of grace? Do you want to live so that finally God must cast you out as Abraham did Hagar and Ishmael, or will you live as a child of promise, trusting alone in the grace and mercy of Jesus, that you may stay at home while you live, with your God, that you may stay in our little Christian home, that you may stay in the Christian Church, that you may stay at home in heaven with your God, forever more?

I am but a stranger here
Heaven is my home!
Earth is a desert drear;
Heaven is my home!
Danger and sorrow stand
'Round me on every hand;
Heaven is my Fatherland.
Heaven is my home.

What tho' the tempest rage?
Heaven is my home
Short is my pilgrimage,
Heaven is my home
Time's cold and wintry blast,
Soon shall be overpast.
I shall reach home at last.
Heaven is my home!

Therefore I murmur not;
Heaven is my home!
Earth is but a dreary lot;
Heaven is my home!
And I shall surely stand
There at my Lord's right hand.
Heaven is my Fatherland!
Heaven is my home!

AMEN.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we ask Thy rich and Divine blessing to rest upon the message of the hour. May we this morning, going back to Abraham's home, learn to know our Father better than we ever did before, and may we enter into that covenant of grace which shall make us a little Isaac instead of an Ishmael the son of the bondwoman. We pray Thee for the perfect liberty of the children of God, for the perfect peace that comes through justification by faith. Help us to trust alone in Jesus, the Son of God, who shall make us heirs of the heavenly Father's eternal life. Lord, our God, hear this prayer in the name of Him who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our

daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

23. The Spotless Sacrifice. *Fifth Sunday In Lent.*

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause He is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. Heb. 9:11-15.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved Hearers in Christ:

WHEN WE CONFESS the second article of the Creed, we thereby acknowledge to the world Christ's person and Christ's office. As to His person, we confess that He is the God-man, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. We not only confess His person, but we confess His office. The office of Christ is hinted at in the last verse of my text when it is said. And for this cause He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. Jesus Christ has three official names: He is called the Prophet, the High Priest, and the King.

During the season of Epiphany and Trinity the Church of God emphasizes His prophetic office, teaching us the great will of the heavenly Father as to our salvation. During the season of Easter we emphasize the kingly office of Him who conquered death and hell and ascended on high. During the season of Lent we emphasize the sufferings of Christ, the

priestly office. It is in this season of the year, if any, that we all ought to meditate day and night on Christ going to Gethsemane, and to Calvary, and there, as the great High Priest, pouring out His life's blood that the world might not perish, but have everlasting life; and in this sacrifice we find Him giving up, not sheep, nor doves, nor cattle, but offering Himself, the Spotless Sacrifice. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" May the Holy Spirit help us tonight to take a view of the Spotless Sacrifice that our consciences may be spotless, and that in eternity our souls and bodies may be spotless before Him who gave us:

The Spotless Sacrifice

I. The Great High Priest

Let me invite your attention this evening to the Great High Priest.

The High Priest of old was a man whom God had selected to stand between man and God, with a spotless garment, pleading and interceding for the forgiveness of his sins. God said further to choose a certain tribe of Levi, and from that family, the family of Aaron, among whom the eldest was to be the High Priest, and this High Priest was to wear a spotless white garment and plead for the forgiveness of the sins of the people, and with the blood of offerings go through the court, and through the Holy Place once a year into the Holy of Holies, and there at the ark of the covenant made with God, plead for the forgiveness of the sins of the world.

Now, my friends, we have not only a high priest in the Old Testament, but we have a Spotless High Priest in the New Testament. No difference how perfect the sons of Aaron were, they were not spotless; they were sinful men, born of sinful women, and had the same battles to fight that other professed Christians have; but in the New Testament we have the Great High Priest. We are told in different books of the Bible about this High Priest, but nowhere as in the book of Hebrews do we find Him pictured so beautifully. Jesus Christ Himself is the Great High Priest, the spotless character, the spotless One who walked on earth, for three long years stood before the people, criticized on all sides by His foes and looked

upon by His friends, and after two thousand years of investigation the world has still to find the first spot on this Great High Priest. He stands before the world today not only as one of the best characters, but as a perfect character. Even the ungodly world is forced to admit that there never was such a character on earth as Jesus Christ; but Jesus Christ was either the Son of God, or He was a bad character. Jesus Christ was either the Great High Priest or He was not a good man. Jesus Christ was either the only Savior of the world, or the greatest impostor that the world has ever seen. He has told us that He is the Son of God. He has told us that He is the resurrection and the life. He has told us that without Him no man can come home to the Father. If these things are not true. He was not a great character. If these things are not true He did not tell the truth, and if He did not tell the truth He is a spotted character instead of a spotless one. But the world admits that Jesus Christ was the most perfect character in all the world, and the Christian must admit that He was certainly spotless, because He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, and redeemed us, not with silver and gold, but with His holy, precious blood. This, my friends, is the Great High Priest that offered the spotless sacrifice.

II. The Great Tabernacle

Let me invite your attention a few moments now to the Great Tabernacle.

“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building.”

You will not forget, my friends, that when Paul, or whoever wrote this epistle, penned these words, that the temple of Jerusalem was yet fresh in his mind, and you will not forget that the first tabernacle was built by the order of God Himself, that the plans were laid by Him who put yonder stars in space; that the plans of the first tabernacle were made by Him who said, Let there be light, and there was light. The first tabernacle had a court, and from the court you passed over into the holy place where the altar stood, and beyond that was a veil, and beyond the veil, once a year we find the High Priest going into the Holy of Holies, there to find the ark of the covenant, having in it the Ten Commandments and Aaron’s rod, and a pot

of manna, and there, on that mercy seat, the Lord God met the High Priest and talked with him, in order that the world might have communion with God. That was the first tabernacle. In time there was built in the city of Jerusalem that great temple, that wonder of the world, that great monument of marble as it stood there in the days of Christ; and around the inside of the wall was the court of the Gentiles, where much business was done, and where the traffic was carried on between the Jews and those others who came there to buy and sell, and it was inside of that court of the Gentiles that we find the other court where the women assembled; and from there we step into the place where the priest stood and offered sacrifice; and from there we go into the holy place which was about thirty by sixty feet; and from the holy place through a veil that was seven or eight inches thick, which was rent on the day that Christ was crucified, back into the Holy of Holies, where the High Priest went once a year. The apostle who wrote this epistle, knowing that these men all understood about that building, calls attention to the fact that the spotless sacrifice does not consist of sheep, nor of oxen, nor of doves, nor of any animal that sheds its blood, but that this great Spotless Sacrifice must be offered in a temple far larger than any temple that ever stood in the holy land. Oh, what narrow views we sometimes have of our church, and of our religion! The people of those days imagined that God was so little that He could be met only within the temple in that city in the holy land. So narrow minded were they in those days as to imagine that the Holy Land contained about all the children of God that were in the world; but, says this great apostle, we have a great High Priest that has a far greater tabernacle than the one you see with your eyes and the one that you build with your hands; I would have you to understand, says this great apostle, that there is a tabernacle so large that the court reaches out beyond the Mediterranean sea, the court reaches across the Atlantic ocean, crosses over to the America to be discovered, crosses the islands of the great Pacific, and comes on around through Asia and through all the nations of the earth, and extends from pole to pole. In other words, wherever you find a man on earth, wherever you find an immortal soul, this is but the court of the great tabernacle where the great High Priest is going to offer His Spotless Sacrifice.

The old tabernacle had in the Holy Place a table on which they placed their shew bread every Sabbath, and on the other side the golden candle stick which was burning day and night, with its seven branches; but, says

the great apostle, I want you to understand that this great High Priest of whom I speak has already been in the court of the great temple for a period of thirty-three years, and there He started one day to offer the Spotless Sacrifice, and passed, on His ascension day from the court through the holy place, and every star above the clouds, and every star beyond those that were seen by telescope, are nothing but the blazing lights of that great temple not built with hands. Oh, says this great apostle, the Son of God, the great High Priest, ascended on high, and passed the altar of sacrifice on Calvary's hill, and passed up, on ascension day, beyond the stars and zones of stars and whirling world systems; these are only the lamps of the great tabernacle; He has gone up higher and higher, so high that when Paul was there one time in a vision he saw things that could not be mentioned here on earth.

My dear friends, the tabernacle of the perfect Spotless Sacrifice is the universe, and heaven is the Holy of Holies beyond the stars. For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this He did once when He offered up Himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated forevermore.

III. The Great Offering

Now that we have seen the great tabernacle, and the great High Priest, let me invite your attention to the great offering.

“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

Here we behold then the Spotless Sacrifice! You remember that in Old Testament times it was necessary that they should take the lambs and pen them up at least fourteen days before the paschal lamb was offered in order

that they might be inspected as to their perfection, but it is a question whether ever a lamb was offered on the altar before the old tabernacle or before the temple in Jerusalem that was entirely spotless; but here we have the spotless Lamb of God; here we have the spotless Christ offering Himself for the sins of the world. You can now see why He is called the great High Priest. The old high priest was satisfied to saturate his hands with blood, but it wasn't his own blood, it wasn't the blood of man; the old high priest put his hands upon the victim's head; he touched the blood, and with the blood on his fingers walked through the holy place into the holy of holies, and there plead with God, with the blood stains upon his hands, for the forgiveness of sins; but our great High Priest did not take the blood of animals; He took the blood of His own body and went up to heaven, and there He pleads for the remission of the sins of the world. We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. Look at the Spotless Sacrifice! Jesus Christ goes down into the garden of Gethsemane, sweats drops of blood. What is the trouble with the Son of God? He is beginning to offer the spotless Lamb. He is the same One of whom John said after He was baptized, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world! It is the spotless Lamb realizing that the time has come that He must bear the sin of the world. The lash is drawn across His back; he bears it all for the sins of the world. The officers of the Sanhedrin hit Him in the face with their fists; He bears it all for the sins of the world. The minor officers come up and with open palms slap His face, but He bears it all for the sins of the world. Sin must act just as sinful as it can. The devil must act just as devilish as he can, and consequently he urges men to walk up and spit into the face of God, into the face of the very Lamb that is spotless, but He bears the crown of thorns, and takes the green tree and walks out, though He breaks down, in the state of His humiliation, because He is willing to be offered for the sins of the world. He goes out on Calvary's hill; one hand is nailed to the right, and the other to the left; His feet are drawn down and nails driven through where the nerves center that the pain would be greater, and there, bearing the sins of the whole world, for all eternity, there He hangs for three long hours in the daylight, from nine o'clock until twelve, near the great city of Jerusalem, that the world may see that this is the spotless Lamb of God, and hanging there during those three hours He prays for the forgiveness of those that nailed Him

there; He prays for the salvation of him who hangs to the right; He there commends His own mother into the hands of John to watch over her until she comes home to Him. Then the sun went down at noon; then darkness spread over the earth; then it was that no one could see, because He was treading the winepress of the wrath of God all alone; there it was that He bore the sins and the hell of hells for all men, in order that we might escape. Was it for anything that He had done? No, He is the spotless Lamb. Was it for any crime that He had committed? No, for there was no spot in His character, but He so loved the world that He gave His life for His sheep. He was a good shepherd. He was the spotless Lamb, and when He bowed His head in death after crying out, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?, after He had cried out. It is finished, He gave up His life as the Spotless Sacrifice, the Lamb of God that would make the Church of God sing in the future:

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee
Let the water and the blood
From Thy riven side which flowed
Be of sin the double cure –
Save me. Lord, and make me pure.”

It was that Spotless Sacrifice that would make the Church of God sing in the future:

"Alas! and did my Savior bleed,
And did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?
Was it for crimes that I have done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown.
And love beyond degree!
Well might the sun in darkness hide
And shut his glories in
When Christ, the mighty Maker, died
For man, the creature's sin.

Yes, Christ, the mighty Maker, the spotless Lamb of God!

Thus might I hide my blushing face
When His dear cross appears.
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness
And melt mine eyes to tears.
But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe.
Here, Lord, I give myself away
'Tis all that I can do."

It is all that I need to do. It is the spotless Lamb of God that has paid the debt.

And now, in conclusion, this Spotless Sacrifice ought to make your conscience and my conscience spotless. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

How many consciences there are that are not pure tonight! How many consciences there are that are troubling you, and you have been trying to quiet that conscience for years; you have been trying to make yourself believe you are perfectly happy, but every now and then that conscience awakens up again and says, you are of all men most dishonorable; you are going on through this world doing absolutely nothing for your Savior, absolutely nothing for the salvation of the world, you are letting everything go as it will, and you seem to think that after all it doesn't make any difference, when we come to die something will happen, something wonderful will be there, and we will at once be transposed from children of wrath to children of God. There is no use waiting for that last hour; there is no use being imposed upon by the false teachings of all error; the thing for us to do is to remember that the Spotless Sacrifice on Calvary's hill was intended to purge us from our sins and to stir up conscience to do something, not because we shall be saved, but because we are saved. Paul, in another epistle said. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Too many people in the present day are trying to get to heaven by their own works, trying to find their own way up there, but those works are dead. You might as well go out to yonder cemetery tonight and ask the dead people to come out on the streets tomorrow morning and walk, as to ask a man in his natural state to come to heaven; his works are dead; he must become a new man; he must have the Spotless Sacrifice to cleanse him of his sin; he must understand that he is an object of mercy, saved alone by the spotless Lamb of God, through the

eternal Spirit; and then, when he realizes he is an object of mercy, saved alone through the mercy of Jesus Christ, he ought to have his conscience purged and cleaned and started up to do something for the Lord God, purely out of thankfulness.

How can you, my friend, accept the Savior as your Savior, and know that He died for you as He did die, and then sit down and say, I am so glad that God saved me, and I am so glad He did it all, and now I will sit down and do nothing more; it is all done. That simply cannot be; it dare not be. The man that knows what Christ did for him must arise and say, My God, what can I do for Thee? Oh, can we not all arise this evening and make up our minds to render God a service such as we never did before? Why should a few people in every church do all the work? Why should a few people only go out and try to gather Sunday School scholars or try to bring in new church members, or work to bring people into the classes? Why cannot every immortal soul, saved by the Spotless Sacrifice of the Lamb of God, arise and walk in the footprints of Jesus, and bear his cross, and with a clear conscience shout out to a dying world. Come to Christ and be saved before it is too late!

There are two little phrases in my text tonight that ought to make an impression on every man: "Eternal redemption," and "Eternal inheritance." When Christ died on Calvary He did not die for a little short life; He died for immortal souls, and that redemption is an eternal redemption for the purpose of giving to you and to me an eternal life. We are just about to add half a hundred new members to this church by confirmation; one or two more evenings shall we be together to give a final review of the great things that God has done for us as taught in Luther's catechism. There are some churches that imagine if they once a year take in new members, and then sit down for eleven months more and do nothing, they have done their full duty. As I said the first time I preached from this pulpit, I believe in a truly Lutheran revival, and that should begin on the first day of January and never end. I believe that a true church of God that is awake should have a class ready to be instructed every time there is one confirmed. In one hour and a half I found six men who wanted to be instructed in the next class; there ought to be sixty as well as six, and I now send out the invitation already, for the first Friday evening after Easter, be ready to come into the new class, be ready no difference who you are. I tell you, my friends, this country has become too full of the light of the Gospel for a man to sit in his

home as a heathen. This world of ours is too full of the demonstration of the power of God for any woman to be a heathen mother. The Word of God has demonstrated its power too much, and life has demonstrated itself in our own city as too short for men to put off from year to year their eternal salvation. What right has any sane man, in a city where three men have dropped over dead in twenty-four hours without a warning, to wait and wait and wait, and make an eternal mistake, when there has been wrought out an eternal redemption for their eternal inheritance? If I were a lawyer I would fight for my client if he were in the right; if I were a Christian preacher, or Christian layman, I would fight for the salvation of souls; and yet we sit around as if this were an entertainment, as if God were a liar, as if there were no judgment to come, and no heaven and no hell. Brethren, the time has come that every man who confesses Christ as his Savior, should arise with power from on high, and urge men to come and accept the eternal inheritance wrought out by the Spotless Sacrifice in an eternal redemption. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, Thou knowest that Thy Son is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that no man cometh to Thee but by Him. O Christ. Thou knowest that Thou art the only Savior of the world, and that the only way to be saved is by Thy redemption, or Thou wouldst not have died on Calvary's hill. O Holy Spirit, Thou knowest that there is no other hope, or Thou wouldst not plead the bleeding Christ to a dying world. Lord God, Thou knowest that it is a battle for a man by nature sinful to become a saved man and even to plead for the salvation of others. Are we not ourselves miracles of Thy mercy and grace? Canst Thou not do for others what Thou hast done for us? Bless the message of the evening. Drive it deep into our hearts and consciences, and help that no house in this city may in the future have anything but a Christian family in it. Hear this our prayer: We ask it in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For

Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.
Amen.

24. God's Mind. *Palm Sunday.*

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man. He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him. and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in. heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil. 2:5-11.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:-

HOLY MEN OF GOD SPAKE as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. All Scriptures given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. These two passages, and others which I might quote, show us clearly that the whole Bible is the Word of the Holy Spirit. The first thing when you read a book is to find out the mind of the author; it isn't so much what is in this chapter or that chapter, on this page or that page, but when you have finished the book, what has the author intended to convey to the reader? In other words, you want the mind of the book, and when we study God's Word we do not study it with the view of finding out what Calvin's opinion was, or Zwingli's, or even Doctor Luther's; we want to know exactly what the Holy Spirit said; we want the mind of God. In our text tonight the Holy Spirit directs us to the mind of God. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. May the Holy Spirit then help us this evening to behold

The Mind Of God

Let us get:

- I. The mind of God the Son;
- II. The mind of God the Father.
- III. The mind of God the Holy Spirit.

I. The Mind of Jesus

In order that we may follow the words of our text, let us look first at the mind of Jesus. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man. He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

1. Jesus Knew He Was The Son of God

What is the mind of Jesus Christ? We discover, first of all, that Jesus Christ knew He was the Son of God. Being in the form of God He thought it not robbery to be equal with God. There wasn't a time that Jesus Christ ever felt that He was robbing God if He said, I and the Father are One. Even as a little child in the crib of Bethlehem, He knew that it was not robbery to say, Here lies the Son of God. What a glorious thought it is that Jesus Christ did not forget His Sonship, and what a glorious thing it is that you and I have the conviction from God's own Word that Jesus is the Son of God! We know it from His names. None but God could be called Jesus, the Savior, Christ the Anointed, Lord of lords and King of kings. None but Jesus the Son of God could be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace! When Thomas stood before Him one week after that first Easter evening and said. My Lord and my God! he recognized it was not robbery for Jesus to be equal with the Father.

Not only do we know this from His names, but we know it from His attributes. Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world! None but God could say that. The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins I None but God could say that. The Father and I are One! None but God could say that.

Not only do we know it from His attributes; we know it from His works. This Son of God who knew that it was not robbery to be equal with God,

was the One that said to Lazarus, Come forth, and he came forth. He was the One that said to the man born blind. Be opened, and he saw. He was the One that said to the deaf. Hear, and he heard. His works demonstrate to the world that this is actually the Son of God, and that He did not assume any power He did not have, when He told us He and the Father are One.

We know it from His honor. Twenty times in the New Testament honor is given to Him as the great Son of God. The grace that is to sustain us is to come from the Lord of glory. The mind, therefore, of Jesus, is that He is actually the Lord of lords and King of kings.

2. God Became Man

Not only is it true that we have from His own mind that He is the Son of God, but that He became man. But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. Born of the virgin Mary, of course He was man, called Immanuel, God is with us. Though He was born man, we find that Jesus Christ grew like a man. He was a child and afterwards grew in stature as well as wisdom. We find He had the infirmities of men; He looked like a man; was tired, hungry, thirsty, and slept, and when crucified He was numbered among the transgressors as a man. There is no question, therefore, at all about the fact that He did become man, and made Himself of no reputation. It is said of Peter of Russia, when his country was in total ignorance of even many things she knows today, he went over to England, and Holland, and Germany, as a poor traveler, not letting the people know that he was Emperor. In Holland he put on a common laborer's garments, took an axe, went to the woods and began to chop with the other laborers; but when his day's work was done and he would come in, then as Emperor he would write letters back to his own country. The fact that he did not walk around in those foreign countries as emperor, did not rob him of the truth that he was an emperor. An emperor is not made by clothing, nor does he lose his emperorship because he puts on an older garment. Because Jesus Christ in all His glory came down on earth and made Himself of no reputation and took upon Himself the form of a servant, did not rob Him of divinity, but at the same time it does prove that He did become a man, and dwelt among men as a servant.

3. God Became A Servant

He became an obedient servant – obedient unto death, and in the state of His humiliation He goes on down from His conception, even to the grave. Was it not a humiliation on the part of Jesus Christ to be conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the virgin Mary? Was it not a letting down of the Son of glory to lie in a little crib on the straw, when He Himself held the stars in all their glory in His hand? Was it not a state of humiliation on the part of this great Son of God to become so little that He lies on His mother's bosom? Was it not a state of humiliation for Him to stand before Pontius Pilate, and before Herod, to be mocked and scourged? There are two ways of opposing Jesus. The one is to oppose Him like the Jews did, and spit in His face, and buffet Him; but there is another way of mistreating the Savior, and that is to do as Pontius Pilate did, and look upon Him cowardly, or, like Herod tried to do, use Him for entertainment. I do not know which hurt the Savior more, to walk up and slap Him in the face, to spit in His face, to buffet Him, or to treat Him as Herod did. When He stood before the Sanhedrin, He answered their questions; when He stood before Pontius Pilate, He gave an answer to the only question put to Him, as to whether He was the King of the Jews; but when mocked and used simply to entertain before Herod, He stood perfectly silent. What pain must have passed through the very heart of Jesus when He saw how men were trying to play fool with Him! He became a servant, humiliated more and more, until at last He hangs on the cross, and there, bleeding and dying, for six long hours, the Savior became the obedient servant that went down to death.

4. God Accepted The Cross

Not only do we find that this was the mind of Jesus, to become humiliated and to go down to the grave, but we find that He was willing to accept the cross as His monument. And being found in fashion as a man. He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. We generally say, in explaining the Apostles' Creed, that the humiliation of Christ ended with His burial. The apostle here says nothing about the burial, nor is it necessary. When He said on the cross, It is finished! when Joseph of Arimathaea, and Nicodemus came and took His body off of the cross and laid it down in a borrowed grave, the apostle looked upon that cross as the

tombstone, as the monument, for the grave in which Jesus lay. True it was that in the grave ended His humiliation. It was a humiliating thing upon the part of Jesus Christ to allow Himself to be laid in a borrowed grave. I look into the faces of so many sitting before me tonight who, during the past years, have laid some of their own dead away to sleep. How would you feel tonight if you knew that your husband, or your little daughter, or your little son, were sleeping in a borrowed grave? You stand by the grave and weep, but you have the comfort of knowing that it is father's grave; it is mother's grave, it is my little daughter's grave, it is my little son's grave; but the world had to stand before the grave of Jesus and say, it is not His; it belongs to Joseph of Arimathaea. Oh, how poor our Savior became, that He might make us rich! And this, my friends, is the mind of Jesus. It was His good mind not only to remember that He was the Son of God, not only to become a man, but to become obedient unto death, and accept the cross as His monument, and where is there a more beautiful monument today in the world than the cross of Calvary, standing at the head of that borrowed grave?

II. The Mind of The Father

Now that we have the mind of the Lord Jesus, let us also try to get the mind of His Father, namely, of God, our heavenly Father. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

1. The Father Exalts The Son

Here we get the mind of our heavenly Father, and His mind is to exalt the Son who was humbled; His mind is to lift up the Son Himself, and to exalt His name, that every tongue should confess Him, and every knee should bow before Him. It was the mind of the heavenly Father to take that Son that went on down to the bottom of the grave, and lift Him up. While Jesus said, I will go down to the world, and I will go down to death, and I will go down to the bottom of the borrowed grave to save humanity, to show My

love and pay the awful debt, the Father said, Son, let this be Thy mind, but My mind shall be to put My hand under Thy body and lift Thee out of the grave; My mind will be to take Thee after forty days on earth and lift Thee up, past the stars, and zones of stars and whirling world systems, past the very gates of heaven, up to the throne, and put Thee above every other being in all the universe. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him.

Not only was it the mind of the Father that Jesus Christ in person as the God-man should ascend to the throne on high, but it was His mind that this exaltation should begin with His descent into hell, as we confess in the creed, and then ascend to heaven, and sit on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. It was the mind of our Heavenly Father that His Son, though dying on Calvary, should stand at the gates of hell as a mighty King, conquer death and the devil and all hell. It was the mind of our heavenly Father that this Son of His should stand in the presence of His disciples, and, starting heavenward, should be seen as He passed out of sight. It was the Father's will that He should be the mighty King, expressed by the words right-hand of God, and rule the whole world, and especially be King of grace and King of glory. It was His will that He should come with all His holy angels on the last great day to show that those that are still living, as well as those that are dead and in their graves should come before His last assize to be held on high. This is the mind of the Father.

2. The Father Exalts The Son's Name

But the mind of the Father was not only going to lift up the Son, but lift His name up. And give Him a name which is above every name. There was a time when the name of Jesus seemed to be ridiculed; there was a time when the people pointed at the cross and said, Here is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews! There was a time when Pontius Pilate unconsciously wrote a prophecy that this King should be known and read in three languages, to show that the Gospel should be preached to all the world. There was a time when men like the Apostle Peter did not have the courage to say that they were followers of this humble Christ; but God the Father said, I will take that name that some of you seem to be ashamed of, and I shall lift that name above every name. Oh, my dear friends, compare the name of Jesus tonight with any other name in the world, and see how it ascended away up on

high. Who, for a moment would think of comparing Alexander the Great with Jesus, or Caesar with Jesus, or any of the apostles with Jesus, or a Luther or any reformer, with Jesus; who Would think of comparing the name of any angel with the name of Jesus? That beautiful name stands high above every name in all the universe; and who put it there? God the Father. That was His mind.

3. The Father Wishes Everyone To Worship Jesus

Not only was it God's mind to lift that name above every other name and make it the sweetest name to be uttered by tongue or angel, but it was His mind that every knee should exalt His name and His person. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. The word "things" is here in italics, and you know it is not in the original language. The strict reading of this verse would be, That at the name of Jesus every knee in heaven and in earth and under the earth should bow. God the Father intended to bend as it were His own knees before His own Son, and say, I exalt Thee; He intended that Gabriel should come before Him, and all the hosts of angels, and they should bow their knees before Him, the mighty King that went down to death; it was His intention that every prophet, and every apostle, and every saint on high shall come before the King of kings and Lord of lords and bow their knees before Him; it is His intention that every living creature on earth, no difference how much they scoff now, no difference how much they ridicule the Church or the people, or anything that is good and holy, it is the very mind of the heavenly Father that every knee, no difference how stubborn it may be today, shall bend before the mighty Christ, who humbled Himself and became obedient unto death. It is the mind of our heavenly Father that men must bow before Him, and not only those that are on the earth, not only the living, but it is the mind of God that every knee that sleeps at the bottom of the sea, that every knee that sleeps down under the earth, in the grave, that every knee that has been reduced to ashes by fire, that every knee shall be raised up from the dead, and when it is raised up, shall bend before the mighty King of kings and Lord of lords.

4. The Father Wishes Everyone To Confess Jesus Christ Is Lord

We have in our text tonight this beautiful demonstration of the mind of God, our heavenly Father, that not only every knee shall exalt Him, but that every tongue shall do so, and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Notice well, it is not said that every knee shall acknowledge Him as Savior, or that every one shall bow before Him and say, Thou art my Redeemer and Savior and I am Thine; not that, but it is the mind of our heavenly Father that every knee shall bow before Him and confess that He is Lord, to the glory of the Father. It is the mind of our heavenly Father that the devil himself must confess that Jesus Christ is Master. It is the mind of our heavenly Father that every fallen angel must not only bend the knee, but must say in the hearing of the whole world, He is the only Lord of lords and King of kings. It is the mind of our heavenly Father that every Voltaire, every Ingersoll, every Hume, and every man that has ever said a word against Jesus Christ, shall stand before Him, and the Father will say, Bend your knees I and down they go. Now speak! and they must speak and say what they never said before, This is, after all, the Lord of lords and King of kings. Every tongue must exalt Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

III. The Mind of the Holy Spirit

We have also the mind of the Holy Spirit. Just previous to our text it is said: If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Here you discover that the mind of the Holy Spirit is that we as Christian people should have one heart, one mind, one love, and learn all this from the mind of Jesus Christ. As I said in the beginning of my sermon, I say again: Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The hand that wrote these words, Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, was moved by the Holy Spirit, and the mind of the Holy Spirit is that you and I shall have the mind of Jesus Christ.

1. Realize Your Value

Now, if we have the mind of Jesus Christ, we must not forget our value. In all His humiliation Jesus Christ never forgot that He was the Son of God. He did not rob God of His glory when He said, I and the Father are one. In the same sense you and I must not forget what we are – must not forget our value. Jesus said of you and of me. What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Do you wonder why Jesus Christ poured out His blood on Calvary? Pray tell me, how else could we be redeemed?

You lost, as a single soul, means more than a world lost. If it were possible that tomorrow morning the papers would print that all Europe sank below the sea, the world would fall down on its knees and ask God for mercy, and yet if all Europe should sink, it would be nothing compared with your value as an individual soul; and if Jesus Christ had to die to save you and to save me, and to save the fourteen hundred millions of people living tonight, to say nothing of the billions that have passed into eternity long ago, and the millions that shall yet be born, pray tell me, where in all the universe is there a price able to pay this debt, outside of the only Son of God? Therefore, my friends, have the mind of Christ Jesus, and know your value, and never forget it. It is a terrible thing for a man to let himself go on without being saved; it is a terrible thing for a man to forget what he is worth; it is a terrible thing for a man just because he has not got quite so much money as some one else, or because he has not got so much fame as another man, to think he amounts to nothing and let himself sink into hell. Have the mind of Christ Jesus, and in all humility do not forget what you are worth.

2. Do Not Forget To Be a Servant

Also like the Savior, Jesus Christ, do not forget to be a servant. How many people there are that want to be lords. So many young men in the present day seem to think if they can just sit in an office, touch a button and give some one a command, that it is great. How many young men in the present day seem to think it is so little to be a servant. The truth of it is that there isn't a real genuine man on earth that doesn't recognize the grandeur of being a servant. The president of the United States is a servant of the

people. There is not a man on earth that is not a servant, if he is a true man. I would, therefore, wish you to have the mind of Christ Jesus, and instead of asking yourself the question all the time, how can I lord it over this one or over that one, let the question be this, how can I serve this little child, or how can I serve this poor fallen being; how can I, like my Savior, lift up the world by going down myself? The Holy Spirit's mind is that you and I shall have the mind of Jesus Christ.

3. Have Your Heart Filled With Love

Not only should we be servants, but should not forget to have our hearts filled with love. fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Oh, that we had a little more of the love of Jesus in our hearts! that we would all go down and served humanity with that love that drove Jesus from His rich throne on high to become an humble servant, ready to lie in a borrowed grave. Let us have the mind of Jesus Christ, and let us have some of the love of Christ in our hearts, and reach out, and down, and try to lift humanity.

4. Don't Have an Aristocratic Church

Finally, is it possible for a Christian church to have the mind of Jesus Christ and then try to be aristocratic? Isn't an aristocrat a nobleman? And where was there ever such a noble nobleman as Jesus? Is it possible for a man to be a true Christian and then look around for a place where he can meet among people that are away up and are not willing to come down? For my part, I say the Christian church should have but one mind, and that one mind must be the mind of the Master, and the Master's mind was, I will go down, down, down, to the very gates of hell, that I may lift people up to heaven; and that same mind must be in the Christian minister; that same mind must be in the Christian church, and just as soon as a Christian church overlooks this great truth that we must be the church that is willing to go down and lift up the people, that we are willing to make the poor feel at home in our midst, just so soon we get away from the mind of Jesus and cannot prosper. If, therefore, our own individual congregation is to prosper, let us keep up the good spirit planted by those who have stood where I now stand and whose bodies sleep in the dust of the earth. Let us be the people's

church. Let every man and every woman feel at home here, no difference how poor they may be, no difference what has been their past, let us not go down to them; they have immortal souls, valuable in the sight of God; and thus we will get the mind of Christ as individuals, we will have it as a church, and, having it as a church, it will be like Christ Himself living in our midst. If Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, as He says He is, and if His children are the lights of the world, as He says they are, then they must be the reflection of the Master; they must do what Jesus would do. What would Jesus do if He lived in Mansfield? What would Jesus do if He were a member of this church, or if pastor of this church? Oh, my dear friends, if we would all do as Jesus did, we would go on down, down, until God would lift us up and those that are with us. May God help us tonight to have the mind of Jesus Christ. May the Father in heaven show us the exaltation that will come to us hereafter by the exaltation that He gave to Jesus; and may the Holy Spirit pour down deep into our hearts the love of Jesus for humanity, and make us willing to suffer that all might live eternally. This is my prayer, and may God bless these words to our eternal good. Amen.

Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we thank Thee for the mind of Jesus Christ, who, though He was Son of God, was willing to become man, made Himself of no reputation, but became a servant and was obedient unto death, and accepted the cross as the monument at the head of a borrowed grave that we might escape death, and have everlasting life. O Father in heaven, we thank Thee for Thy mind that has seen fit to lift up Jesus Christ and exalt Him in person, to exalt His name, and make every knee exalt Him and every tongue confess His exaltation. O Thou Holy Spirit, we thank Thee that Thou hast come into our midst and hast given us the command that we have the mind of Christ Jesus, and if each of us has this mind, we will all have the same mind, and we pray to Thee Father that this mind may be one in heart and one in love, that the good of humanity may be in this mind, and that by Thy grace we may lead them all to Him who conquered death that we might have everlasting life. Heavenly Father, do Thou bless the service tonight; bless Thy servant in the message He has delivered, and may it find good

ground in the hearts of all those who have come to this temple this evening. Lord our God, help us to sum up all in this, Thy prayer, when we pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

25. Jesus' Jewels. Confirmation Sermon.

Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return. and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not. Mal. 3:16-18.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Dear Class and Christian Hearers:

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST was so rich that He was the only heir of heaven and earth, and yet on that Palm Sunday He rode into Jerusalem as King without any golden rings on His fingers, without any jewels about His neck, on a borrowed animal, and rode over borrowed clothing. The palms that were scattered before Him were palms of honor, given to Him by greater jewels than ever could be given to wear. Those people that cried out along the highway, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! were largely children and people who came to the Passover to offer sacrifice to the true and living God, and they had in them immortal souls. They were jewels for which God was looking. During the past year the largest diamond that has ever been discovered, has been found. It is estimated at four millions of dollars value. Oh, how many people would love to have a little piece of that diamond set in a ring to wear on their fingers! In our own city a few weeks ago a great effort was made to obtain a ring that had a little diamond in it. Now what that little diamond was to the ring, your own souls are to the circle of this earth. Who cares for the ring if he can get the diamond, and who cares for a little ground in this world if the immortal soul which in God's sight is called a jewel, shall be

his? The Lord, speaking of these immortal souls says, And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up My jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Dear class, I would have you to remember this morning that your own souls are more valuable than all the world, for what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the world and lose his own soul, or what shall he give in exchange for his soul? I address you therefore this morning as:

Jesus' Jewels

- I. On earth
- II. On the Judgment Day
- III. In heaven

May God the Holy Spirit help me this morning to say a word that shall hold these jewels in their places in God's merciful hand until they shall be His on the other side of the Judgment, in heaven above, is my prayer,

I. Mined and Marked

Usually the jewels that we see have been *mined and marked*. Whence come these jewels sitting before me today? They, too, have been mined, and God has put His mark on them by which they shall be known even on this earth. Whence have you been mined? Listen to the words just preceding my text: Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say. What have we spoken so much against Thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

1. The Black Foil Surrounding

Ye have said, It is vain to serve God. Notice the black foil around these jewels. Usually we find that jewels are set forth the brighter because of the darker foil around them. The question arises this morning, Where did God

get this large class? Where did He mine you? From what kind of a world did He bring you out? And the answer is, that back of these jewels lies the dark foil of sin, from which you have been brought out by the means of grace. You, yourself, have undoubtedly said many a time, it is vain to serve God. Let me ask you this morning whether you have always been willing to study God's Word as you should. Have you always been willing to listen to God's Word and pray to have more knowledge of the truth, or has there not been a time in your own life – now be honest as you sit before me – has there not been a time in your own life when you have been rather careless and reckless, putting off from day to day what should have been done long ago? Haven't there been times when you said, what is the use to be a church member? Haven't there been times in your life when you said, what is the use to go to God's house, and what is the use to hear God's Word, and what is the use to go to Sunday School, and what is the use to go to catechetical instruction? Boys, do you remember just a few months ago how glad you were to escape my class? Don't you remember how you would rather have played ball, or run and wasted your time, and even deceived your own parents, than to sit here and hear God's Word? Haven't there been times in your own history when you have even scoffed possibly a little bit at things that were good and holy? Haven't there been times in your life when you said, what is the use of this religion? Haven't there been times when you said, the church members are hypocrites, any way? Haven't there been times when you were rather going the road, that if we would all go that way there would be no church and no preaching of the Gospel, no holy baptism in our midst, no Lord's Supper? Brethren, if it is right for you or for any one else to sit at home on Sunday morning like this, in health and strength, and not hear God's Word, then it is right that I should be away from this pulpit; then it is right that all these Christians should take their hats and go home; then it is right that we should tear down God's house and stop praying and stop teaching, and all live like heathen and go to the devil. Whence did God mine these jewels? Oh, I am not surprised at all at what you have said and done in the past, born in sin, sometimes surrounded with careless homes and careless environments, with voices saying. Come, come out into the world, and eat, drink, and be merry, with a thousand forces trying to draw you to destruction; the miracle of miracles this morning is not that Jesus turned water into wine, not that He made blind men to see, not that He raised Lazarus from the dead, but the miracle of all miracles is this, that you

as a class are sitting here today as God's mined jewels out of the dark and sin cursed world.

And how has He mined you? How has He changed your mind about these things? He did it through the means of grace; He did it through the Word of God. The Christian people prayed, and prayed, that God might bring you into His kingdom. You heard a sermon some time or other, some where, that made an impression on you. Somewhere or other God's hand reached down and took hold of you as it never did before, and said, Now stop and think. Somewhere or other the pick went down into the ground and found the rich diamond that has been found within the past year, and God's eternal law thundered into your conscience and into your soul, and said. Now is the time to change; now is the time to turn; now is the time to serve God Almighty. Life is here, now; tomorrow it may not be; the Judgment is coming; the privilege is here now to serve my God and Master; and there was a moment in your life when you said, either aloud, or you thought it. My God, I am willing to be mined. It is God that quickeneth in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. And so He mined you as jewels out of the dark, sin cursed world, and brought you step by step to the true life, so that you are now sitting here; you now love to give yourself entirely to God; you now love His Word and feed on it, and this Word today is as sweet to your souls as good bread is to your bodies when you are hungry. God has done it all. Praise to His holy name! God's jewels!

2. The Marks

Notice the marks the Holy Spirit puts on His jewels. You have noticed, dear class, how people mark their silver and gold and precious gifts, so that they can always identify them. Thus God marks His jewels that He can see them from heaven and they can be known on earth. He puts four marks on them.

They fear God

A child that loves his parents fears every day that he might do something to offend those parents. Such a filial fear God's jewels must always have. The more you fear God the less you will fear man. It has well been said that one, with God on his side, is a majority. Dear children, wherever you are,

whatever the world says, whoever opposes you, under all circumstances, and if it costs your lives, please God, and fear Him.

They are not yoked together with unbelievers

God says, when the unbelievers were ridiculing the wishes of Him, Then they that feared the Lord spake often to one another. They could not bear to be in the company of scoffers. Dear class, mark what I say, you cannot have the company of children of the devil and be God's jewels. Preachers and church members may be yoked with unbelievers, but God's jewels never. We are living in a sinful world, and among sinners, but jewels must remain jewels, and remain together. God expects you from this day to live in single or married life with His jewels. God does not want you to call a child of the devil your brother.

They come together often and encourage each other to be faithful to God until death

How we love to meet our old schoolmates! But you are more than schoolmates; you have come together for nearly one year to prepare to remain together forever; this is the beginning of an eternal school; today you expect to make a vow to be faithful to God until death. You should be more than friends; you should take such an interest in each other on your heavenly journey that you will never lose sight of each other. Remember your class. Let each one keep a constant watch over the rest. Let none fall back on his journey because he is weak in the faith. Last winter some hunters in the west left one of their number lie in the snow to die while they went on to save their own lives. They were severely condemned by the press for not rescuing the weak one. Stand by each other until death. If one fails to come to the house of God; if one fails to be found at this altar when the Lord gives His supper, then go after him, and pray for him, and by no means let God's jewel be stolen by the devil. Do not treat each other like strangers. Do not forget to follow after the Lord Jesus.

They keep God in mind

They thought upon His name. If you do not think more of God, you have no right to think that you are God's jewels. Feed your mind on God; study His

Word in the Sunday school; let nothing but a reason that would satisfy God keep you from His service; buy good Christian books and meditate on them; read them at home; read the name of God on every leaf and every blade of grass, on every flower, on every rock, in every star; think of God when you lie down to sleep, when you rise, when you work, when you rest, when you prosper, when you fail, when you suffer, when you enjoy yourself, when you die; think more of the Father's name; never forget that sweetest of all names, Jesus; always keep the door of grace open for that heavenly dove, the Holy Spirit.

These four marks God has written not only on His jewels but on the book of His memory. And the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them. God in heaven is listening to this day's service. He hears your vow. He marks His jewels and writes the marks down on His memory.

II. God Wants His Jewels on Judgment Day

Not only do we find that God's jewels are mined and marked on earth, but He wants these jewels also on the Judgment day. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels... Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.

1. The Day Coming

Dear class, there is a day coming when you will not assemble in the presence of fifteen hundred people as you do this morning; there is a day coming when you will stand in the presence of those that you have laid away in sleep in yonder little grave; there is a day coming when the sea shall give up its dead, when all the graves shall give up their dead, when those who are on earth, in the twinkling of an eye shall be changed; the day is coming when the Son of God, your Savior, who cut you out of the sin cursed world will come with His holy angels in all His glory and will call upon you to stand up before Him, and on that day you shall be His, He says, "When I make up My jewels." Oh, what a blessed thought on that day, God will arrange His jewels, and engrave them.

2. He Will Arrange Them

In this world we sometimes do not know who are Christians and who are not. In the church it is said there are men who will beat their fellowmen as quick as any scoundrel on earth. Oh, what a pity I but I guess it is true, but what a great compliment it is to the church of God that a bad man is a hypocrite in a church. If the church were bad, a bad man could not be a hypocrite in the church. It is said that in the church of God there are men who will not pay their debts. What a pity! but if everybody in the church did not pay their debts, nobody would say anything about it. They tell us there are men in the church of God that will curse and swear. Oh, what a pity! but they are not in God's invisible church; they are only in the congregation. They tell us there are people in the church living in fornication and adultery. God knows; I do not; but if they do, I want them to understand that there is a day coming when we will know just exactly who served God and who did not; there is a day coming when hypocrisy cannot stand a moment; there is a day coming when the Lord God Almighty shall sever the righteous from those that are lost and condemned in sin as the wind severs the chaff from the wheat. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not. Then we will know the difference. On that great day there will be no such a thing as a man being a Christian and his wife a child of the devil, or a wife a Christian and her husband a child of the devil walking arm in arm. God will say, Apart, forever. On that day those that have walked hand in hand, some professing to be Christians and others not, will hear a voice that will say, To My right, ye children of God, and to the left, children of the devil. Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. These are My jewels. God will arrange that on that day, my dear friends. You go to your home and you will find a little spot somewhere, where you keep your little jewels. There is a time coming when the Lord God Almighty will take those that were baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and were faithful to Him until death, and arrange His jewels, and say. These are Mine; I have them arranged now forever. May God find every one of you arranged by His hand on that day.

3. He Will Engrave Them

And not only does He arrange them, but *He engraves them*. I called your attention before to the fact that you are already marked here on earth, but on that day you will receive another mark. A book of remembrance was written before Him of them that feared the Lord and thought upon His name. There is a book of life where the jewels are recorded, and on every jewel you will find these words: My jewels! Oh, may God this day stamp that mark on every one of your souls – My jewels!

III. God Will Use His Jewels After Judgment Day

Not only do we know that on that great day they shall be marked as His jewels and His forever, but He intends to keep His jewels in heaven after the Judgment day, and on that day they will be His own jewels, and He will use them, also.

And I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. How would you spare your own son, father, that serves you? Suppose you had an only son, and he is good and faithful, works hard and does his duty in every way, when would you be ready to tell that son, Now get out of my home, I am done with you? Where is the home that wants to get rid of a faithful boy that is true to father and true to mother, and not a lazy hair on his head? Now then, says our God, as to you. His jewels, I will spare you as a man spareth his own son that serveth him, and that is never. I tell you, my dear friends, you are God's jewels, and when you come before Him on that last great day, He will look upon each one of you as if you were the only jewel He had. He does not bunch the whole world together and say these millions of people are My jewels, but He takes your daughter. He takes your son. He takes your father, He takes your mother, and places you in the palm of His hand, and among all the people in all the world He says, You are My jewel, and as a father spareth his son (not sons) an only child, so will I spare you; you are Mine only. Oh, it means something, dear class, to be created in the image of God; it means something to have a soul that came out of the mouth of God; it means something to know your value. If I could only impress two thoughts upon you today, I know that you would be safe for life, on the Judgment day, and forever. The one is your great value; and the other is the eye of God in mercy open over you every moment.

When you have entered into the presence of your God as I hope you will forever. He not only will have you there as His own jewels, but He will have you there as useful jewels. As a man spareth his own son that serveth him. There are some sons that would be no loss to their families if they did leave them. I have in mind some men that I see in Mansfield; they wear good clothing all the time. Go up and down street when you please and you will see some of them standing on the corner, well dressed; they never do anything; we never see them working; they surely eat, for they are looking hearty. If the earth could just drop through a hole all of that class of people, there would be no loss to the world; but a son that serveth some one, a son that serveth a master, that works for the welfare of man and for the glory of God, he is a loss to any community when he leaves it.

Now then, says God, I have no use for jewels to make a show. Jesus did not ride into Jerusalem on that memorable occasion with golden rings and many jewels about Him, but still He had His real jewels with Him, for when the children sang Hosanna to the Son of David! the proud Pharisees said, make the children keep quiet, but God said if they kept quiet the very stones would have to speak, and the little jewels sang to the glory of God, and He used them. Do not think for a single moment that when you come to heaven you will sit down there and forever and ever enjoy heaven doing nothing, seeing nothing and being nothing. God will use you, and He will use you to His glory, and He will have you serve Him forever and ever. It is a good thing to have jewelry when you can make use of it. Where is the man in this audience today that would want to give up his watch? That is jewelry, but we use it, and every bit of jewelry that you can use, wear it, and everything that you can not use, throw it away, sell it, get rid of it; let us just wear what we have got and use what we have got, for that is the way God will do with you as His jewel. He never has a useless jewel around Him, and if we are all children of God here and serve Him here on earth, in this world, and are faithful until death, He will give us the crown of eternal life.

Not very long ago the Prince of Wales was presented with a very valuable time piece, given by the queen to the coming king. Surely it was a beautiful gift, but the strange thing about it was that when the Prince of Wales wore the watch it stopped and would not run; something was wrong with it. They took it to the best jeweler in London and when he opened it he found there was just one little thing wrong with it, one little jewel was lost, and when that was replaced the watch gave the time, and it is today the

valuable gift of the great queen to her son, the king; and I was thinking just a moment ago how I would feel on that last great day when we stand before our heavenly Father, if one of these jewels should be lost. Dear class, it is not for personal honor that I have labored with you as I have throughout the past year. I might sit at home with my family on an evening as other men do; I have been there one evening since Christmas. Why would I spend my time with you? Why would I run to your homes after you? Why would I pray for you and labor with you as I do? Why would I this very day spend a handsome sum of my own money that I might well use for others, just to give you a present? It isn't simply for the present's sake. There is something in this book that I shall hand you, a great message. It means something more than personal cost for me to instruct you and bring you into the church of God; it means that you are to take these books home and remember in years to come, when this tongue is silent, when I can talk to you no more, what your faithful pastor told you, and how he begged of you that you might be faithful and dear jewels until death, and receive the crown of eternal life. Can it be that any of you boys or any of you girls can go out into life now after having heard what you have, and lead a bad life and bring your parents to shame, disgrace your church, and try to comfort yourselves by saying, I did not know? Dear class, on that Judgment day I will testify against you if you do not serve God until death. You do know. You know God's truth, and you know how to live aright; you know how to live virtuous lives; you know how to be true to your fathers and mothers, true to your church and true to your government; you know your duty to God and man, and I beg of you today as in the presence of the great God on the Judgment day, do not let me find on that day one jewel lost among all these jewels.

And may I say a word to you as parents and as friends of these jewels? Are you praying for their faithfulness to their God? Are you setting an example in your home to teach them to leave their religion in the church? I see the faces of some of you here today whom I have not seen before. Can it be that you expect these little children to lead you instead of your leading them? Can it be that you are setting an example that will possibly cause some of these jewels to be lost on that last great day? Does it mean nothing to you that God says that on that last great day of eternal destruction some will gnash their teeth and weep? Can it be that possibly one of these jewels will be lost and there in hell gnash his teeth at you, his father, and say, you

are the cause of my damnation, or that you, mother, have caused me to live as I did? I will never allow you to gnash your teeth at me on that day. Oh, I beg of you as a class, follow my Savior, and let us walk in His footprints and be faithful until death, and at last receive the crown of eternal life; and from this day until you die, unless sickness of your own, or the sickness of some one else keeps you at home, never allow the Sunday to pass without being in God's house and hearing His Word. Never allow the holy communion to be celebrated without going to the altar and receiving the body and the blood of your Master. Never allow the day to pass without praying to your God. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. Think over these things, and then, on that last great day when we all stand there before God, and I can be with you and you with me, all Christians and saints together, then we will hear God say. These are My jewels! Thanks and praise be to Him who has mined us out of the sin cursed world, and with the means of grace has kept us, marked and polished, and here we stand, and we shall serve Him as an only son serves his loving Master. God bless you, my jewels! God bless you, God's jewels! Amen.

26. The Serpent and the Savior.

Good Friday.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. John 3:14-15.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THE FIRST PROMISE OF A SAVIOR was made to the old serpent, the devil. Gen. 3:15. Side by side throughout the Bible and in universal history you will find the trail of the serpent and the path of the Savior. This morning we stand on Calvary's hill and behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, bleeding and dying on the cross, and the old serpent is there, too. Let us not lose sight of:

The Serpent And The Savior

May God open our eyes now to behold both of these in the days of Moses, and the days of Nicodemus.

I. In The Days of Moses

Let us first behold the serpent and the Savior in the days of Moses. There were three kinds of serpents in the camp of Moses. When we read the history of the fall of man and of the conduct of the children of Israel in the wilderness, it is not hard to discover the trail of the same serpent in the garden of Eden and on the way from Egypt to Canaan. That same old

serpent that caused Cain to kill Abel also caused the children of Israel to rebel against Moses and God.

As a result God sent fiery serpents to strike their deadly, poisonous fangs into the rebels until one by one they died in agony. Then they saw their mistake. Then they called for Moses to pray for them. Then they confessed their sins and begged for mercy. Why could they not see their wrongs when God was feeding them with bread from heaven? Why must God shake man over the abyss of hell before he will open his eyes to see? Why can we not see our duty when God blesses us? God saw their agony and heard their confession and prayers and then gave orders to Moses to make a serpent of brass and put it on a pole and lift it up in the wilderness and ask the bitten ones to look at it and be healed.

This brazen serpent, says Jesus, was a type of Himself. That brass could not help, but Jesus was there in the camp – “Jesus Christ, yesterday, today, and forever.” The Israelites rebelled against Moses and against God in the wilderness. In short, they rejected Jesus Christ Himself at that time. Jesus taught them then and there that they must be saved by death. Bitten by the serpents, they were filled with the poison of serpents and had to look at a dead serpent to get help. From a distance the serpent of brass on the pole looked just like the serpents running along on the camp ground, but closer investigation showed that it was a brazen serpent without life. Please remember right here that nothing could save the bitten people at this hour but a look at the serpent of death! Just a look – nothing more and nothing else. If any one thought a look could do no good, and would not look, he died and there was no help for him.

II. In The Days of Nicodemus

Now let us come over to the days of Nicodemus. In the days of this ruler the serpent and the Savior were in Jerusalem. The trail of the serpent and the promise of the Savior run side by side through the Old Testament. At first Satan seems to be an ordinary serpent, but in the days of Job he is seen as Satan indeed. At first the promise of Jesus seems to point to an ordinary child, but in the days of Job He is already known as the Redeemer. In the days of Nicodemus Satan was no longer hiding his serpent nature. Then he was possessing men as never before. During the ministry of Jesus Christ the

very powers of hell were turned loose. Then he not only possessed ordinary men, women and children, but the religious leaders. When the Pharisees, Sadducees and scribes fight Jesus during His ministry, when the hard-hearted mob stands around Jesus and spits in His face, and buffets Him, and slaps Him and scourges Him, and crowns Him with the crown of thorns, and cry out Crucify Him! Crucify Him! I say when we see and hear all this, we almost see the fiery serpents shoot out their tongues! As the serpent and the serpents were in the wilderness, so they were in Jerusalem that time when Jesus was teaching Nicodemus the necessity of the new birth. Nicodemus could not understand this great mystery. It was not necessary for him to understand it. Israel did not understand either how looking at a serpent of brass upon a pole could help when they were dying of serpent bites, but it did help, and “so must the Son of man be lifted up that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” Jesus, too, looked much like another man, but He was no sinner. He was the God-man – God – able to pay the debt of a lost world – sinless man – willing to die and be our Substitute. He was lifted up alive, but taken down dead, and Nicodemus helped. As the dead serpent of brass helped in the wilderness as a type of Christ, so we must look up at the dead Lamb of God to be saved. “Look unto Me, all the ends of the earth, and be ye saved, for I am God and there is none else.” Not by our own merits, not by our own righteousness, not by anything that we can do are we saved, but alone by the look of faith at Christ on the cross. “And I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all men unto Me.” “In my hands no price I bring; simply to Thy cross I cling.” Like Bunyan’s Pilgrim, look at the cross till the bundle of your sins falls off and rolls down into a deep grave – where Jesus slept, and rose again. Amen!

Note: Read the author’s Wounded Word.

27. The Lump Leavened. *Easter Sunday.*

Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 1 Cor. 5:6-8.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

HAIL TO THE RISEN KING – JESUS CHRIST! In Him there is joy! Joy in the heart of every true Christian! I cannot imagine how any man who is a child of God can be sad and sorrowful on Easter morning. When we know that Christ rose from the dead and conquered death and made heaven sure for all believers in Him, why should we not rejoice? You may be surprised that the Church of God has selected a text like this for Easter morning. The very first sentence seems to be addressed to the people to make them sad instead of happy. “Your glorying is not good.” Remember the Apostle Paul wrote this epistle to the church in which there was one man leading a very ungodly life, and the people, instead of putting him out, or taking him into discipline, simply gloried in his sin. Let us not forget that Easter morning is not only a joy to the child of God, but is equally a message that ought to make a sinner trouble. If Jesus Christ had been crucified and never had risen from the dead, then might children of the devil be happy this morning. But mark you, the very fact that Jesus Christ did conquer death, the very fact that He assured us by this resurrection that you and I shall rise again, and that every knee on earth shall come and bow before Him, ought to make a man tremble if he is not a Christian. Easter morning, therefore, is a

message of joy only to the Christian, and a message of sadness and sorrow to every man who is not prepared to meet his God. Oh, what a morning that will be when you rise from the dead, because Jesus Christ rose from the dead, if you died unprepared to meet your God! “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?” says the apostle. I call your attention this morning to:

The Lump Leavened

May the Holy Spirit show you this morning how the whole lump of the world has been leavened.

- I. By a little sin;
- II. By a little Son.

I. By a little sin.

It was a little sin, in the estimation of some people, that Eve committed in the garden of Eden. She just did one thing that God said she should not do. In comparison with our sins, Eve committed a very little sin, but that little sin leavened her family; that little sin brought Adam to sin; that little sin brought Cain and Abel to sin; that little sin lifted up the club of Cain and killed Abel; that little sin, in other words, leavened the whole lump of her family, and not only of her family, but of every family. Am I wrong when I say there is no one in this house today who is not suffering on account of some special sin found somewhere back in his own family? When we stop to think that God said, I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate Me, my friends, it ought to make us tremble to look into the future; it ought to make us ask ourselves the question, Is our conduct such as to leaven our families with sin or with righteousness? Yes, you are suffering this very morning on account of your own family leavened with some kind of a sin.

It is not only true that a little sin leavens the whole lump of the family, but also of the church. The Corinthian church consisted of intelligent people. There were probably no people on God's earth in that day that were more acute in mind, more able quickly to grasp a thought, than the people

of Corinth, but the Apostle Paul had not left that church very long until a certain man married his own stepmother and was guilty of adultery, and the congregation having lived so long in heathendom and in this very sin, thought. Oh, well, it is a little weakness, let it pass; but the apostle wrote them a letter and said, Watch out: a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. One bad man in the church, tolerated there, without repentance, will affect every member of that church. Can you have a sore finger on your hand, and be well? Can a congregation have a member in the church living an ungodly life, knowing it, and prosper? A little leaven will leaven the whole lump, and consequently it becomes our duty as a church to look around very carefully, and if we positively know that there is one member who is living an ungodly life, let his sin be what it will, let us not go around and throw some devilish suspicion where it should not be thrown, let us not sit around and talk when we have no right to talk, but if we know anything, then let us go, as God says, to that person, and tell him, eye to eye, this is your sin, and you must repent of it and acknowledge it before God and ask His forgiveness, and stop, or I will be compelled by God's own order, to report you to another person, and that other person and I will come to you according to Matt. 18, and there tell you of it face to face, and if you will not listen to us, then tell it to the church, and if you will not listen to the church, then you must be put out, for a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

Not only does this little sin leaven the whole lump of the church, but it will leaven the whole community. If I dared to mention names I could show you what evil one man can do in the world; I could point you to a man who went into a little village that was known for its good Christian people; I could show you how that one man's sin nearly drove to ruin another person in that village; I could show you how that one person accomplished what he wanted, and how these two people ruined two more, and how those four ruined eight more, and that whole neighborhood in twenty-five years has become tainted by the poison of that ungodly wasp called man. I could show you how the offspring of that man has come to Mansfield, and I could show you how that man in Mansfield has done more harm than any five preachers can do good. A whole community leavened by the little sin of one man.

Not only do we find a whole community is sometimes leavened by a little sin, but nations are leavened. It does not take a very intelligent reader

to know what we mean when we speak of the sin of the Orient. It does not take a very intelligent reader in history to know what we mean when we speak of the sin of Europe, or of the special sin of Germany, of France, of Paris, of London, the special sin of the British, or of the Americans. The whole nation leavened.

Not only is it true that a little sin has leavened a nation, but it is true that it has leavened the whole world. Where is the man today on earth who is not tainted with the sin of Eve in the garden of Eden? Where is the human being breathing today among all the multitudes, all colors and races, who is not suffering on account of the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah? Where is the person on God's earth today who has not suffered bodily and mentally on account of the first sin that entered the world? Every graveyard, every battlefield, every moan and groan that is heard this morning in all the hospitals of the world, can be traced back to a little sin in the garden of Eden, from the little tongue of that old serpent, the devil, at one time an angel from heaven.

II. A Little Leaven

On this Easter morning let us not forget how a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump of sin.

“Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

And how shall we have this new leaven of sincerity and truth, except in Him who here is called our Passover? “Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us.” In the German translation of the Bible, Doctor Luther has translated this word feast “Ostern” or Easter. In other words, the passover of old is looked upon as only a type of Jesus Christ who went down to the grave and rose again, having died on Calvary as our great Easter Lamb, or our great Passover.

Now, just as the little sin leavened the whole lump, so the little Son of God leavened the whole lump of righteousness, and purity, and salvation. Let us see how this was done in the antediluvian age. When Adam and Eve

had sinned and God appeared on the scene. He stood before Satan and said, I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, and it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise His heel. Now that little seed of the woman was the promise of the little Son that was to leaven the whole lump of the world, and that promise was none other than the promise of Jesus Christ, born of the virgin Mary, to crush the head of the serpent that was to crucify His heel, crucify and pierce His hands and His feet. That little leaven went on working in the antediluvian age. Some of the people were faithful. Noah and his family trusted in that seed; but then came the great flood; but even the flood could not wash that seed out of existence; the family was saved.

Then came the prophetic age and throughout that prophetic age you find the little leaven leavening the whole lump. In time Abraham was chosen as the father of nations. There was a promise made to him that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. In other words, God showed Abraham how through Israel the time should come that this little Son, promised in the garden of Eden, should so leaven the world that everywhere they should sing songs of praise to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Time passed on and Isaiah saw the leaven working, and he put a stamp on it. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. They saw the leaven working and the people of Israel cried out. Watchman, what of the night? How long, how long, until the King of Glory shall come? And Daniel saw the leaven working, and he looked out beyond even the present time and saw how the whole world should be blessed through Him who shall be born in seventy-two prophetic weeks.

Time passed on and the very star of the east came and said, Look down into the crib of Bethlehem and there you will find the little Son. He was born. At the age of twelve He astonished the Doctors of Divinity. At the age of thirty He became that wonderful minister. The old serpent of hell now began to crawl over the earth and stretch herself out as she never did before, that old serpent now began to possess men, women and children, and the Son of God preached as He never preached before, and the louder He preached the more Satan roared, like a roaring lion, until the time came that this Seed was lifted up on the cross of Calvary. The great Passover was now hanging on Calvary's hill. The serpent struck the sting of death. Then He was carried to His grave and lying there sleeping in the grave from Friday

afternoon over the Sabbath until Sunday morning. He arose from the dead. Then it was that the little Son stood before the gates of hell as the mighty Son of God, as the mighty Conqueror, the mighty Victor, and sang, O death, where is thy sting? – sang, in the language of Goethe, “Speak, hell, speak, where is thy victory? Behold, Satan, behold thy kingdom crushed!” And then the angels of God flew down from the realm of heaven and rolled the stone from the grave of the Son. Victory had come! The leaven was leavening the whole lump. Christ had risen from the dead! A new power was coming. Pentecost was coming. The Holy Spirit was coming. The fiery tongues from heaven were to kindle a new flame on earth, and then the earth was beginning to feel the power of the leaven of the little Son.

The Dark Ages came. The Middle Ages came. It looked for a while as if the seed was all buried; it looked as if the wonderful Christ that rose from the dead was buried under the lava of a great eruption by the sin of the people. But, my dear friends, all the fires of persecution, all the darkness of the Middle Ages, could not keep the leaven from working. Your mothers know very well that that you set your yeast at night, and while you are sleeping it works, and in the morning it is ready; and just so the Middle Ages was the dark night of history, when the great leaven of the Son of God was working on down in caves, down in dark places the world did not see. Mighty men of God held to the sacred truth and wrote with their pens dipped in the blood of the Lamb the mighty truths that shook the world in the great Reformation.

We have not only this leaven working in the Middle Ages, but we have it working in the missionary age. When Doctor Luther arose on that morning of 1517 and nailed his ninety-five theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg, he sounded the trumpet that not only shook the seven hills of Rome, but the trumpet that shook all Europe, and all nations are today enjoying a blessing on account of what took place in the Reformation. I would have you to understand that the last century was not the only missionary century in history. We sometimes talk about the last century as if the Church of God had done more in the last century than she ever did before. I want to say to this intelligent audience this morning that if the foundation had not been laid on Calvary’s hill, and by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, if that had not been done which was done in the dark night of the Middle Ages, there would not have been a Reformation, and if there had not been the Reformation of the sixteenth century, when theologians did not

stand around with glasses on and say we think this, or that, when it was not popular to find fault with God's Word, but in those days when by the Holy Spirit they got down to the message of God's Word and said, what did God teach, and reduce it to a science; they laid the foundations strong in that century that made the last century possible and will bring about a greater reformation in the future than there ever was in the past, all because the leaven of the Middle Ages and of the Reformation is now working – working its way into every city, working its way into the Church; and the time is coming – mark what I tell you – that the ministers of the Gospel who find fault with the old Bible dare not preach in the Church of God any more. The time is coming when the leaven of the Resurrection and of the Reformation, the mighty leaven that we feel today in our hearts and souls, will compel every stubborn man to do one of two things, either intelligently to go to hell, or to turn back to the true and living God. Such, my friends, is the little leaven of the little Son of God in the great lump of the world today.

“Your glorying is not good. know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump as ye are unleavened. For even Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us. Therefore, let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

Purge out, therefore, the old leaven. That is the way to keep the feast. That is the way to celebrate Easter. Let me urge upon the First Lutheran church this morning to carry out church discipline to the letter. It seems to me the time has passed that we can bear rottenness in our midst; the time has come that the old leaven must be purged out. Do not get scared because we lose a family now and then. We do not want to lose a single member, but thanks be to God, when we do lose those that do not want the truth. Thanks be to God when we do lose those that cannot bear the truth. I, for my part, am always willing to clean house, not only at home but in the church. Let us clean house this spring. Let us clean house this Easter morning. Let us make up our minds that it is far better to have that man out of the Church of Corinth if he does not live rightly than to have him in there, and make up our minds so to preach, so to testify, and so to live that a man that sins in the First Lutheran church, and I hope every other church, is compelled to do one of two things, either to live nearer to God every day or to stop playing hypocrite.

This leads me to say furthermore, in conclusion, that the way for us to celebrate Easter is not only to purge out the old leaven, but to leaven our own families with Christians, and the whole Church of God. As I have already stated, it seems to me the time has come when we must do greater things. I find too many families connected with this church in which there is a father, or possibly a mother, or possibly a son or daughter, who are not yet Christians. How long are you going to live that way? How long shall this thing go on that way? Pray tell me, isn't it time that every family has enough Christianity in it to leaven the whole lump? Isn't it time that the Christians in every family have power enough from on high to bring all of them into the house of God and into the kingdom. I have a special request to make of you this morning: If you have got a member of your family that is not a Christian, come and get this card, or one like it. I am going to read it to you:

Will One Of Your Family Be Lost On The Day Of Pentecost?

Not if that one will spend seven Thursday evenings between Easter and Pentecost, from April 27th to June 8th. from 7:30 to 8:30 P. M. in the First Lutheran Church and hear seven talks on:

THE WAY MADE PLAIN.

Jesus says, "Go work today in My vineyard!" Go right now and get all the adults of your family and among your friends who are not professed Christians to signify their intention to attend these seven meetings by signing this card. Let us have a real Pentecost June 11th.

Work And Pray.

Now, my dear friends, if Peter and John, and the Marys could get up on the first Easter morning at sunrise and run to the grave, if those two young men could go from Jerusalem to Emmaus, seven and a half miles away, and in a short time be back in that upper room where Christ was on that first Easter evening, can you not this afternoon go a mile, or two miles, or three miles, can you not go into your own family and say, my son, my daughter, you are now past the age of twelve or fifteen and I want you to be a Christian; we want to live together here and in heaven; put your name down here and simply promise that you will sit down seven evenings and listen to the Way

Made Plain, and if after you have heard those seven addresses and you know the way to heaven, if you are still bound to go to hell, I will still beg of you, Oh, don't go, but if you do go, I want you to go knowing that your father and mother prayed that you might be saved; that we did our duty? I appeal this morning for volunteers. I want 200 men and women to start out this afternoon, and stop putting off from month to month what you ought to do today. This command is not the command of your pastor, it is God Himself who says "Go" – do not sit down; "work" – do not be lazy; "today" – not tomorrow; "in My vineyard" – it is God's vineyard in which we are working. We might just as well on the day of Pentecost have five hundred men brought into the kingdom of God as to have them sitting around where they are sitting this morning, lost and damned, and some do not know it. May God bless these words is my earnest prayer. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for this morning commemorative of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of the world, our Savior, my Savior. O Lord, I pray Thee this morning as Thy servant that Thou wilt impress the message of the morning on the heart of every hearer. If there are any in this house this morning who have been living a life of sin, O God, bring them back to Thee. Help them to repent. Help them to come to Him who alone can help, and that the old leaven may be purged out of the lump. We pray Thee furthermore that Thou wilt pour into our hearts the spirit of love, the missionary spirit, that reaches out to bring many into the kingdom of heaven, that lump, heavenly Father, that is growing and being leavened by the little Son of Man, the great Son of God who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

28. What Would John Join? *First Sunday After Easter.*

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 1 John 5:4-12.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Dear Christian Friends:

JOHN WAS THE ONLY ONE of the twelve disciples that died a natural death. He reached the age of about one hundred years, and the thought occurred to me as I read this text, what would John do if he were on earth today? Where would he actually be? What Would he join? The Roman Catholic Church members tell us that Peter was a Catholic. How about John? Would he be in the Lutheran Church? Would he be in the Presbyterian Church? Would he be in the Jewish Church? Would he be in the Salvation Army? Would he be a Christian Scientist? Would he join the Masons? Where would John be? I am glad for one thing that we have reached a period at least in this church, and I think in history, when things that used to be considered questions not debatable, are now debatable. There was a time, not a hundred years ago, that if a man came to a city and said anything about Masonry, for instance,

they would get some paint and paint him, and they would not let those men get off of the train any more; they would send them home as fast as they came. That day has passed. There was a time when, if you would say anything about the Lutheran Church the Lutherans were angry, or if you would say anything against the Catholic Church, the Catholics were angry. We are reaching a time in history when intelligent men are discovering that anything that is not worth discussing is not worth anything, and that things that are not worth testing are not worth anything. I may pay my respects this evening to the Lutheran Church, I may pay it to the Protestant Churches, I may pay it to the Jewish Church, may be to the Christian Scientists, may be to the Salvation Army, may be to the different things that come into my mind as I pass along. I simply wish to say tonight that this text is so full of good things that I wish I had ten evenings instead of one to expound it. It is so full of the real essence of true Christianity that I am led to ask the question:

What Would John Join?

The Roman Catholic Church

I shall pay my respects a few moments to the Roman Catholic Church this evening, and the abuses there. The Roman Catholic Church has many things that are worthy of imitation. Her hospitals are so grand and so good that I can never think of the Roman Catholic Church without praising her for taking care of her sick. The last evening I spent at Omaha I was called out at twelve o'clock at night to visit a sick one in a Roman Catholic hospital, and there I saw those good, angelic nuns sitting there in that large hospital reading their words of prayer and giving their lives for the good of humanity, and a man who just publicly and in a wholesale way denounces Catholicism is an ignoramus. When you see how the Roman Catholic church reaches down into its pocket and not only supports the priest but several good school teachers to educate their children the first twelve years, I say shame on the Protestant church that she doesn't take the same care of her children. But when I ask myself the question, Would John join the Roman Catholic Church, I find a little difficulty. For instance, I do not

believe that you could ever get him to pray to the virgin Mary. I open my Roman Catholic catechism and I find these words:

“I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary, ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the Saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I beseech blessed Mary, ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and all the Saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me.”

John would never utter those words. John had Mary in his own home for fifteen years. John heard Jesus Christ from the cross call Mary a woman. “Woman, behold thy son!” and “John, behold thy mother!” Now, if John heard Jesus call His own mother “Woman” instead of Mary, not only when He was hanging on the cross, but when He turned the water into wine, do you suppose that John would ever have prayed to the virgin Mary? Do you suppose he would call upon Paul to pray for him when Paul is dead and buried? Do you suppose he would call upon any saint when God said. Thou shalt worship the Lord Thy God and Him only shalt thou serve? No. John would find a little difficulty along that line.

Again, John would insist most emphatically upon an open Bible for the laymen. He says here, And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit and the water and the blood, and these three agree in one. Any one who reads the Bible carefully will understand that John speaks in that verse of the Bible and Holy Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper, as being the means of grace. He says that this record in earth is intended for the people. Therefore, if John were to find that any church on earth would not say to the masses, here is the Bible, read it, he would say. That is not what I want; I want the Word of God to have free course; I want the Word of God to read; I want the people to know the message of the true and living God.

Again, I find that John would not agree with the way the communion is distributed in the Roman Catholic Church, for there you all know that the priest gives only the bread – or, as they believe, the body – to the communicant, while the priest only takes the wine, or the blood. Now then, says John, there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water and the blood, and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. John was sitting at the table when the Lord’s Supper was instituted, and he heard Jesus say. Take, eat, this is My

body; and then he heard Jesus say. Take, drink ye all of it, this is My blood which was shed for you and for many for the remission of sin; and John, having heard and seen that Jesus Christ distributed both elements among the disciples, would never be where he could not have the cup as well as the rest. So you see he would have trouble to be a Roman Catholic.

II. The Jewish Synagogue

Would John belong to the Jewish Church? One thing is sure, he at one time did. There was a time when John belonged to the old Church of Israel; there was a time when he, like all others, was looking for the coming Savior; and then the Savior did come, and the Savior one day saw John and others and called him, and John followed Christ and stayed with Him for three long years, went with Him to His trial, stood by Him at the cross and took care of His mother for fifteen years, and learned many things in those fifteen years that doubtless the other disciples never learned about the private life of Jesus Christ in the first thirty years of His life.

John never left the Jewish Church but the Jewish Church left John. The Jewish Church was looking for Christ. Christ came. John remained true to the Jewish Church and accepted Christ, and many of the Jews left Israel, and left John, and left the Savior. Now, if you were to ask me today, would John follow the Jews that rejected Christ, I would positively say no. If you were to ask me, did he leave Israel, I would say no. John remained faithful to Israel, faithful to Jesus Christ, and would not today be found in any Jewish temple, and I will tell you why. He says here, Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? Again, And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. We all know the Jewish Church today has not got Christ, consequently it hasn't got the Savior, the life, and if it hasn't got the life, how could you expect John to join the Jewish Church. No, the Jews would have to come and join with Christ in order to be with John. So you see very plainly that he would not join the Jewish Church.

III. Any Protestant Church

Would John be willing to join any Protestant Church? In others words, would it make no difference to John which church he would join? Surely it would. There are Protestant churches that deny the Trinity. How could John join the Unitarian church, when he says here, There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. Surely John believed in the Trinity of one God in three persons; consequently, if any Protestant church would deny the Trinity, John would say, I cannot go with you. If any Protestant church would deny that man might be lost, he would never join that church. John could never have joined the Universalist church, for he says here, He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. Now we know that thousands of people even in this Christian land today have not got Christ; they don't want Him; and at the same time the Universalist church will say that that man in some way or other, they never tell us just exactly how it is going to be done, but that he will get to heaven some way. I say it cannot be, for he hasn't got life. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater, for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son, he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. The man, therefore, that denies there is a heaven and a hell, or that there is no hell, if he acknowledges a heaven, has made God a liar. Are we going to believe what Doctor So-and-so says, or are we going to believe what the Son of God says? Are we going to believe what some man has tried to think out with his little brain, that only weighs a few ounces, or are we going to believe Him who has a mind larger than the Universalist Church?

Again, John would not join any Protestant church that would not make the right use of the means of grace. There are some churches that do not seem to know what the Lord's Supper is; there are some churches that do not seem to know how the Holy Spirit comes to man; there are some churches that do not seem to know that the Holy Spirit has got channels through which He comes to man, just as the water has a channel to reach the sea, just as the stream comes down from the mountain. That channel is pictured most beautifully by John. There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one. In other words here we have got the voice of the Holy Spirit. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. When I write you a letter and

you read that letter, I come to you through that letter. Here is the letter of the Holy Spirit. When you read that Word the Holy Spirit comes to you. He not only comes to you through the Word itself, but He comes to you through His Word connected with water in holy baptism, as He came to these two little children tonight. Not only through His Word connected with water, but comes to man through His Word connected with bread and wine in the Lord's Supper when He says. Take, eat, this is My body, and, take, drink, this is My blood. Now then, says John, these are the means of grace; that is the way the Holy Spirit comes to man. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one – one what? One Word! Then there are Protestant churches that do not seem to think it is necessary to be baptized; who do not ask the question. Are the children baptized? who change the words of the Lord's Supper, how could John join that church?

And it is a well known fact that some Protestant churches find no fault whatever even with a minister if he begins to pick out one chapter or verse after another and says that does not belong to the Bible; there are even people who tell us that this very chapter I am reading now is an interpolation, that it slipped in some way and was afterwards copied, that it does not belong to the original manuscript. I would say on that kind of criticism of the Bible, if I hand you a paper to copy, and after the copy is given up I find on one paper something that is not on the other, it surely is not a copy. A man cannot copy something that was not in the original, but if I should find something in the original that is not in the copy, I should simply draw the conclusion that you skipped a sentence. The Word of God has been copied for centuries. Manuscripts have been found all over the ancient world. Once in a while some man picks up some manuscript that was found and does not find a verse that belongs in the fifth chapter of John, and so he draws the conclusion that if it is found in the Bible it is an interpolation, or, in other words, the manuscript that has the verse is not as good as the one that has not got it. Common sense would teach a man that the manuscript that has something the other manuscript has not, is the better of the two; consequently, if any manuscript in the world has this fifth chapter of John, I should say it is the best manuscript; and, after all, it is a very foolish man who will accept part of the Bible as God's Word and refuse another part; a man would be a fool to say that God made one-half of the sun but not the other; or to say that God made one-half of the moon but

not the other; when God makes a moon He makes a moon; when He makes a sun He makes a sun; when He makes a world He makes a world; and when He took it into His mind to give the Word to the world He gave it, and no man nor devil can ever rob me of my faith in the Inspired Word of God, nor could he rob John, and if John found a church where any minister of the Gospel would begin to pick at this verse or that verse, at this chapter or that chapter, John would walk out and say: This is no place for me.

IV. The Salvation Army

How about the Salvation Army? We have a great many people in the present day that put the Salvation Army on a parallel with the church. Surely I would be the last man on earth to say anything harmful of what they do; the Salvation Army has been doing a work that the Church of God should have been doing these many, many years, and I respect no people more than I do that Salvation Army man or woman who goes down into the slums and there helps some poor old drunken sot to stand up, or who helps to clothe the poor and does the good work that the Church of God ought to do; but there is one thing we must be very careful about and that is, not to call the Salvation Army a Church, for if we do, then, my friends, I would be the last man on earth to have anything to do with it, and I will tell you why. The Salvation Army does not baptize any one; the Salvation Army does not give the Lord's Supper; the Salvation Army does not give two parts of what John wrote in this verse. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one. The Salvation Army says, we will let the baptism to one side, and we will let the Lord's Supper to one side, and we will just take the Word of God and preach it. That sounds very logical and very nice, but really, my friends, could you preach the Word of God and leave out baptism, or leave out the Lord's Supper? There is the great weakness of the Salvation Army. What I say to you I have said to their captain and to them time and again as officers, you must do one of two things, you must either urge your members to go into the church and be baptized and get the Lord's Supper, or you must have baptism and the Lord's Supper, and not make the people believe you are preaching God's Word when you are not preaching it all. That must be plain to everyone. John, who wrote these words, And there are three that

bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one, would never be satisfied in an organization that does not make use of the full means of grace.

V. Christian Science

How about the Christian Scientists? The Christian Scientist is not half as bad as some people make him. The Christian Scientist has one thing I wish every church in the world had; the Christian Scientist does not go from house to house and say, How is your health today, or how are you feeling this morning? We have been asking that question around in our homes and as a rule in society, so long that every person is feeling around to find if there isn't something wrong somewhere, and we are talking about sickness until we actually think we are sick. If nine-tenths of the people that arise in the morning and have a little headache and don't feel well would go to work and sweat, they would feel all right. And if we had just enough of the Christian Science in us to stop talking about sickness all the time and thinking about sickness, and just get out and work and try to help others, we would forget a good deal about our sickness. That is the secret of Christian Science and that is why some people are so taken up with it. They have been surrounded with an atmosphere of grumbling and murmuring so long that when they get into a home where they are made to feel that we are all happy and all right, they say, that is the kind of an organization I want to belong to. But after all, there is something about Christian Science that would not suit John. They do not baptize any one; they do not have the Lord's Supper; they are not making use of the means of grace; they are not making use of the command. Go ye into all the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, leaving out the essentials; they have not got the promise that you and I have got, that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. John wouldn't feel at home in that kind of an organization, for on page 473 of Science and Health they actually deny that Jesus is God.

VI. The Secret Societies/ Freemasonry

What would John join? Would he join the secret orders? There are some very good things about secret orders. I would be a fool if I thought every man that belonged to secret orders were not a good man. There are so many preachers in secret orders these days that I would have to denounce the ministry if I did not have something good to say of good men; but I am not talking about men, about whether this man is good or that one; the question I propound tonight is this, would John join an oath-bound secret order? I am not talking about labor unions nor those organizations that simply have an affirmation; I am talking about those organizations that demand an oath when a man enters; those that have a religion – a religion with a chaplain; a religion to bury the dead; that have a religion for opening and closing with prayer. I am asking myself the question, would John join that kind of an organization?

It seems to me that if John would remember what Jesus Christ preached in the sermon on the mount he would have difficulty. For instance, Jesus says in Matt. 5:33-36: Again ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time. Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but thou shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths; but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. No man ever joined an oath-bound secret order without breaking that law; no man ever joined an oath-bound secret order without forswearing himself, and although the promise should not interfere with his family, nor his church, nor state, it does interfere with his family. That night he goes home and his lips are nailed shut; he can talk over with some bloated winebibber what he cannot tell his wife. It interferes with his church, for as soon as he dies those men, if asked, will stand around his grave and take the place of the church. And it does interfere with the state, as I could show you from many an unjust verdict of the jury. So I think John would have a little trouble in that line.

He would not, if he would remember what he wrote in the third chapter of his own Gospel. John 3:19-21: And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are

wrought in God. I do not see how John could harmonize that with light trying to hide itself. Let your light so shine that men may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. Again, I do not think that John would forget what he wrote in John 18:20 with his own pen concerning Jesus Christ. When they arrested Jesus He said: I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. How could John go into that order?

Furthermore, John wrote in this epistle: There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. The first thing that would be asked: John, do you believe in a Supreme Being? Why, surely I do; every fool believes that. But, John would say, what do you people believe here? Why, we don't define what we believe; we don't interfere with any church; a Jew can come in if he believes in a Supreme Being; a Christian can come in if he believes in a Supreme Being; a Chinaman can come in if he believes in a Supreme Being; any person if white, or not too dark, can come in if he just believes in a Supreme Being, and he is welcome. But, says John, I wrote a letter in the old Bible, and I wrote there that the true God is the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Do you all believe that here? No, sir; we do not. Well, I don't know whether I can come in here or not. But, another thing, you can just believe as you please about that; we let every man believe as he pleases. I understand you have a chaplain? Yes. What does he believe? Whatever he pleases; he can deny Christ or not. Have you prayer in His name? No, sir; we cannot do that because the Jew would not like it, and some other men wouldn't like it, and so we leave Jesus out and put in the great Supreme Architect of the Universe. Jesus can stay outside until you come out and then He can go home with you.

Some people think this is only opinion, but I want you to understand that God's Word is not opinion. An eighteen years' investigation of this question is not opinion. Every man that sits before me this evening, if he has any intelligence whatever knows, positively knows, that a man does not need to believe in Jesus Christ to be a master Mason, or to join any oath-bound organization, until he comes up to a certain degree of Masonry. You know that, and you know furthermore that when you come to your burial service of your friends there is no Christ in it. You know that. People say, why don't you come to the funerals as other preachers do? I do go. I want to explain myself tonight. I am willing to go to the funeral of any man that dies; I am

willing to preach his sermon; I am willing to go to his grave; I am willing there to give the service that he deserves; if a Christian I will give him a Christian burial; if no Christian I will not give him the Christian burial; but there is one thing I will not do and I want this congregation to understand it. I fear a great many people do not know what the blessing means. When I lift up my hands to pronounce the blessing at a grave, or anywhere else, it means that I sanction what is done here. If a man dies belonging to a secret order, if you want me to go to that grave and bury him, and pronounce the benediction, I will go; but if you expect me to wait until another organization comes around that grave and has a service without Christ in it, and expect me to pronounce the blessing on that Christless service, I would rather have these arms torn from my shoulders than do that. The fault you have to find with me is that I stand up for Christ only as long as I live. I have no fault to find with men; I have no hatred toward any man on God's earth; I love everybody. Can you find a man in this city whom I hate? You cannot do it. I love everybody; but there is one thing that John would not do; there is one thing I will not do, if I have got to dig somewhere for a living; I will never in my life pronounce a benediction on a Christless service, and you know that I am right. You know that I am right! I am not around looking for funerals; I am around looking for living people. I am trying to save your souls.

VII. The Lutheran Church

But now, in order that you may see that I am fair, I have no particular fault to find with one organization more than the other, it is only fair to ask the question, Would John join the Lutherans? and I am satisfied if he would come to some of these old German Lutheran Churches – and I am a German – and he would find the pews filled with big, bloated up saloonkeepers, John would say, I will not join the Lutherans. John was too clean a man, too clean in his faith and too clean in his life, to feel at home with people who do not worship and live as God wants men to live. But there is one thing I will say for the Lutheran Church, so far as Lutheranism is concerned, John was a Lutheran and he would never have to join the Lutheran Church either. We hear a good deal about joining church; I never found in the Bible that any disciple ever joined any church. You cannot find a single instance. I do

read in the Acts of the Apostles that God added to the church daily such as should be saved. I do find that Jesus Christ has said in the third chapter of John that a man is born into the church. I do find that John writes in this fifth chapter that a man must be born into the church: Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and everyone that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. A man is born into the church, and, born into the church, he has got a faith in the true and living God, and living faith in the true and living God, he is a power that the devil and the world cannot overcome. After all, my friends, it is faith that overcometh the world. It is faith that wins the victory, and faith must come from being born into the church, and not by joining.

VIII. The Answer

And so I will answer all my questions tonight by saying that John would not have to join anything. When you were born at home you did not join your home; you were born there, and there is nothing in all the world that can take you away from the family in which you were born; you may walk away from it, but you are still a member of that family; your mother is your mother, and your father is your father, and you cannot get away from them because you were born there; and so John was born into the Church of the Lord Jesus, and if he were living today yet he would be in that church, and that church would believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God; that baptism is a command of God; that the Lord's Supper is the gift of God's grace, as He says. That man would be faithful to the church in which he is born until he would breathe his last, and then he would overcome the world and the victory would be his, and he would pass home where all victory and death is left back, conquered forever. May God bless these words tonight, and put you all to thinking and praying, and render the best service to your Master that you can, is my prayer. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for Thy glorious truth that is so powerful, and so plain, and so compelling. Lord God, we thank Thee that in a period of a little over two years Thine own servant has won a victory that the world cannot overthrow, by staying close to Jesus. We pray Thee tonight that Thou wilt impress this message upon the hearts of all those that are here. We pray Thee that Thou wilt help that every father and mother, every son and daughter and every little child just born shall all come into Thy kingdom through the means of grace. Lord our God, give us Thy Holy Spirit; do Thou enlighten us, call us, sanctify us and keep us. We ask a special blessing this evening upon all who are in this house. O God, help them to remember that Thy Word is precious; help them to remember that we come to the house of God to hear what Jesus has to say; to hear what the Holy Spirit has to call; to hear of the Father's love; to learn more of the narrow way; to live closer to the Master; to live more intensely; to find out our faults; to hear more of the truth that will abide when the heavens fall. Lord, our God, do Thou bless the service of this hour, and now fill us with songs of praise and prayer to Thee. And especially do we ask Thee to bless all those that are broken-hearted; those that have recently laid to rest their dear ones. Watch over them; be with those that have their own dear ones afflicted at home. Heavenly Father, be the physician of all the sick, of all the weary, of all the brokenhearted; heal them. Lead us all to true repentance; cleanse us of all our sins, in the name of Jesus Christ, and by His precious blood, O heavenly Father, may we pray more sweetly and earnestly His own prayer that He taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

29. The Shepherd and His Sheep. *Second Sunday After Easter.*

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously: who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live into righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. 1 Peter 2:21-25.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

WHAT A CHANGE there would be in this world if some little thing that God made had never appeared! What a change there would be in the literature and in the history of nations if the Lord had never made a sheep! What a blessing the sheep has been in creation! Many and many a poor traveler would have starved had it not been that God created sheep; many a person would have died of cold had God not wrapped him up in the warm fleece of the sheep. Little would we know of the relation of God to man had He not created the sheep. It has often occurred to me that the Lord, foreseeing all things and knowing that the time would come when Jesus Christ would have to have the relation to man such as could not be found or explained in any other way, said, I will make a sheep in order that the people may know the relation between the shepherd and his fold. The first good boy that was born into this sinful world was a shepherd; the greatest poet that ever sang was a shepherd, and the greatest poem he ever penned was this: The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. The greatest prophet that ever lived said the

most beautiful thing he ever said when in the 40th chapter and the 11th verse of Isaiah, he penned these words: He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. The great Prophet Ezekiel, who soared upward in his language, called attention to that great Savior, Jesus Christ, in these words: Ezek. 34:23. And I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even My servant David; he shall feed them and he shall be their shepherd. In the Gospel lesson for this second Sunday after Easter, we find these beautiful words of Christ: I am the Good Shepherd and know My sheep and am known of Mine. As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father, and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. Notice well, my friends, that the sheep hear the voice of their Shepherd. That man that does not care to go to church does not care to hear the Gospel, does not care for the great Shepherd of souls yet. The author of the letter to the Hebrews, speaking of Jesus Christ, says “That great Shepherd of the sheep.” In our own text this evening the Apostle Peter says. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. In the 5th chapter of this same letter, and the 4th verse, he says: And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. I invite your attention this evening to:

The Shepherd And His Sheep.

- I. The Shepherd's steps.
- II. The Sheep's steps.

I. The Shepherd's Steps.

Let us notice the steps of the Shepherd. “For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow His steps.” What were the steps of Jesus Christ? How shall we follow them? You can easily know the steps of the Savior by noticing that they are always full of *goodness*, full of *suffering*, and full of *patience*.

1. They Are Full Of Goodness

In the verse previous to our text the apostle says: When ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. The Lord Jesus Christ did well. His footsteps were always filled with goodness. Nowhere in the footsteps of Christ can you find that He ever did a wrong; everywhere He was doing good. Whatever else may be said of Jesus Christ, there is one thing that the world has long ago acknowledged, that there never was such a good character as Jesus. If I were to ask the intelligent world today, what was the greatest and best character that ever walked on earth, I believe the answer would be unanimous, it was Jesus of Nazareth, whose footsteps were always filled with goodness. The Apostle Peter sums it all up in four little words, "Who did not sin," and adds to it the compliment, "neither was guile found in His mouth." To whom can I point on earth and say, he never sinned? It is so well known that all men sin that when a man stands up and says, I never sinned, you can get a unanimous vote that that man is a liar. Sin is the transgression of the law, and he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all. One of the best men that ever walked on God's earth, who laid his head upon the breast of the Savior, said. If we say we have no sin we make Him a liar and the truth is not in us. But look at the footsteps of Jesus! no difference where you find Him, as a little child His footsteps are filled with goodness; as a child twelve years of age they find Him sitting in the temple among the doctors. His footsteps were filled with goodness. At the age of thirty He began a three years' ministry, and in that ministry He was constantly looking for someone, somewhere, to do an act of kindness, no difference whether it was the blind, or the deaf, or the crippled, or the fallen, His hands were always ready to do good, to lift up, to help heavenward, and wherever He stood. He stood in the footprints of goodness. Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously, who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness. By whose stripes ye were healed. Whether they spit in His face, or whether they scourged Him, whether they nail Him to the cross, or stand before that cross and revile Him, we find nothing but hands of blessing upon those that curse, a prayer for those that crucify Him. His feet stand in the footprints of goodness.

2. They Are Filled With Suffering

Not only is it true that his footprints are filled with goodness, but they are filled with suffering. Sometimes we speak of the sufferings of Christ as if they lasted only one day and one night, or sometimes as if they lasted only one week, and call it “Holy week”; sometimes we speak of His suffering as lasting three long years; but, dear friends, did it ever occur to you that Jesus Christ suffered all the days of His life on earth? What suffering it would be for you, a good moral man, to put you into a den of thieves and thugs, and keep you there for a period of thirty-three years! But when you are among thieves and thugs, it is only a man that is somewhat bad with men that are a good deal worse, but how would you feel if you were perfectly sinless, as Christ was, and were forced to come down on earth and dwell among devils and the possessed of devils? Why, as soon as Christ was born. His feet were thrown into the cold stable, and He began to suffer; His first trip was to Egypt, to escape the wrath of Herod; His walk to Jerusalem was over the pebbles and stones. Those blessed feet that could have walked on the stars – suffering! At the age of eight days He was called Jesus, and shed His first blood, and all through life, surrounded by ungodly men and women, looking forward and knowing what is coming. He felt the pangs of death on the cross long before He died. You and I have escaped many a pain through our ignorance. If some of you knew what would happen in the next twelve months, you would shudder in this moment, but God in His wisdom has kept it back that you might not know it. The Son of God in His omniscience saw Himself bleeding and dying on the cross for not only thirty-three years, but those thirty-three years were the physical punishment of what He saw before the foundation of the world was laid. And then, when we come to speak of those last days of His life! Look at them revile Him, and He reviled not again. Watch them buffet Him, but He gives no reply. Watch Him as they take Him before Pontius Pilate, and scourge Him, fulfilling the prophecy, with His stripes they should be healed. Watch Him as they select the place of severest pain, where the nerves center, in His hands and in His feet, there in those nerve centers they drive the nails in, and make Him suffer. Watch them as they select the place where all the blood flows through, and thrust the spear into His heart; they find the brow that will have all the pain centered in the brain, and strike down the crown of thorns. If ever man suffered in all the world it was the God-man, and if ever nerves

suffered in pain it was in the feet of the lowly Jesus as He hanged upon the cross. His footprints were filled with suffering.

3. They Are Filled With Patience

And not only were they filled with suffering, but they were filled with patience. When He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not. Suppose you and I would have had almighty arms as Christ had when they spit in His face, what would we have done? Suppose you and I had been on that cross bleeding and dying, and men would have come around and thrust out their tongues and said. He helped others, let Him come down from the cross and help Himself, you and I would have come down, and never gone back. But the prophet said He should be like a lamb that is led to the slaughter. God knew what kind of a Shepherd Jesus would be, and purposely created a sheep, into whose flesh you can cut and it never opens its mouth. God knew what would happen to Christ, and consequently gave the little lamb as a type of the sufferings of Christ and the patience that He should have. And John cried out, Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world! Oh, what a wonderful fold! The Lamb becomes the Shepherd, and the great Shepherd the Lamb – the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world, and opened not His mouth! Oh, the patience of Jesus Christ! Is it any trouble, my friends, to find the footprints of the great Shepherd? For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example' that ye should follow His steps.

II. The Sheep's Steps

Let us notice also the sheep's steps as well as the Shepherd's. With regard to the steps of the sheep we find that some of them led *away from Christ*, some of them lead *back to Christ*, and some of them *follow after Christ*.

1. Sheep Going Astray

For ye were, as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. Ye were as sheep going astray. Oh, what a difference there is between the steps of the sheep and the steps of the

Shepherd! The sheep all went astray, and when they do go astray you remember they never come home of themselves. We are told in God's Word that no man can say that Jesus Christ is Lord but by the Holy Ghost. We are taught in God's Word that the world as well as the individual, like a sheep has gone astray. Look at the history of the world, if you please. Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden knew their God, but in a short time where is Cain? Out in the field with club lifted up ready to kill his good brother, out of jealousy. – Going astray. Look at the human race from that day until the flood. God gave them one hundred and twenty years to repent, but the sons of God went out and married the daughters of men. In other words, the family instead of remaining Godly and Christian, were bound to go out and follow the devil. Young men did not ask themselves the question, Is this bride of mine a Christian or not? Young women did not ask themselves the question, Is this young man a Christian or not? I want to tell you young people right here tonight, the young woman that will marry an ungodly man is purchasing a hell on earth. The young man that will marry any one but a Christian wife is founding a home that means hell on earth. But that is what the world has been doing – going astray – and today there are nations on earth that do not know who the Shepherd is. Even the eight souls that were saved by the great flood, all of them around the altar, all praying to the true and living God, in a short time forgot the Shepherd and strayed away. It is not God's fault if there is a heathen on earth today. He told them who He was when He began the world; after the flood He showed them who He was a second time, and in the days of the apostles the Gospel was preached to the civilized world, but where Jerusalem stood is where a great class of heathen is dwelling today, and the great land of Egypt where the church of God had the greatest revelation the ancient world knew, is covered today with men who do not know their God, and if the people of our own city will not be faithful to the old Bible, faithful to the Shepherd of souls, it will not be long until our young people will not know who their Shepherd is. The whole world, I say, has been going astray, and what the world has done, individuals have done.

We talk about good people, and about bad people. My dear friends, I am making an assertion that I know is true, from God's Holy Word, and from my own experience and the experience of the best men I have ever met. There is not one sitting before me tonight who has not, somewhere in his life, some place, some steps that he took that were not in the footprints of

Jesus Christ. I am not saying that every man has been a thief; I am not saying that every man has been an impure man as the world calls impurity, but I do say in every man's life somewhere there has been something of which he would be glad if the world should never know. My friends, we have all gone astray. The footprints of man have been away from God, away from the great Shepherd. For ye were as sheep going astray.

2. Sheep Coming Back

But, my dear friends, thanks be to God, there is an opportunity for man to come back to the great Shepherd. "But are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." The apostle Peter was writing to a class of people who had been heathen and became Christian and had come home to their God again. Now we can find in history many a one has gotten the new life of regeneration, and the returning life in conversion. The starting point is the new life. Some people never seem to distinguish between regeneration and conversion. They talk about the time they were converted as if a man could only be converted once in his life. The great trouble with some people is that they never were converted but once, and consequently they are going to the devil today. Do you understand that? Do you understand, my friends, that when a man is converted and turns around and follows God, the moment he goes wrong if he is only converted once he stays wrong? A man can be regenerated only once, as he can be born only once. No man has been born into this world twice, but only once, and so no Christian has ever been regenerated twice, but only once. Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. He must be born before he can come into the world and before he can see the world, and just so a man must be born again before he can see heaven or enter heaven. But when he is born again he is not in heaven yet, and when he is born again then he must also be nurtured, and on the way of the Christian life when he perchance strays off of the right path, God says, Come back to the Shepherd, and when he turns back he is converted. The apostle Peter was a Christian the day that Jesus said. Follow Me, and he followed Him; but the time came when the old fisher spirit ruled in his heart, just as the time sometimes comes in your heart when the old Satanic spirit gets the upper hand, and then Peter began to curse and damn and reject Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ said. When thou art converted,

strengthen thy brethren. He said, Peter, you are going to fall, and Satan will sift you like wheat, and he would have damned you, but I have prayed God to spare you. When you do fall, then come back, come back to Me again, Peter, and I will restore you, and, having fallen, you will have sympathy for other fallen people, and instead of pushing them down you will lift them up and say, I thank my God that I have been so close to the gates of hell that I have mercy on the fallen man and love to lift him up; and so the apostle Peter says you have gone astray, but you have returned and come back to the great Shepherd of your souls. Oh, let me call upon every one in this house tonight, if you have ever strayed away from Jesus Christ, come back tonight, come back to the great Shepherd of souls, and do not go any further astray.

3. Sheep Follow In His Steps

And then when the wandering child of God has come back to the Savior, he is told to follow in His steps. "For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps." And now since you know that the steps of Jesus Christ are filled with goodness, and filled with suffering, and filled with patience, you ought to know how to follow in His steps. "Do well, for so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." When ye do well. It is not hard to find whether a man is walking in the footsteps of Jesus. If Jesus spent His whole life doing good, there is only one way to follow in His steps, and that is to do good. Try to act out the life of Jesus Christ on earth. When He was reviled. He reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not; He was good all the time, doing just exactly what was right. Are we doing well? Are we doing our very best? I know that Jesus Christ was perfect and we are not; I know that He never sinned, and we are by nature sinners; but is your object as you sit before me tonight, having been baptized into Jesus Christ, and put on Christ, to walk in His footprints? I am sure if you understand what I am trying to say tonight, you will know far better how to act in the future than you knew in the past. You say it is all right to go to the

dance. None of us will take the position that dancing is wrong, but could you imagine Jesus Christ going to the ball dancing with his neighbor's wife, staying up until midnight or three o'clock in the morning, riding home in a cab? Can you imagine Jesus Christ sitting down for three or four long hours playing cards, just the same as the gamblers down in the den? Can you imagine Jesus Christ so spending His time in His short life, with so much to do and such a short time to do it? I am not going to say tonight what is wrong nor what is right. There are certain questions that you never can draw the lines, but I am going to give you a rule that will be a guide for you and for me. What can I do, in the balance of my short life that will exhibit me to the world as near like Christ as possible? That is my path and must be yours if you walk in His footsteps.

And we must not only do well, but if ye are going to walk in His footprints we must be willing to suffer for righteousness' sake. "For what glory is it if when ye be buffeted for faults ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." Now then, if I do a wrong, and the law punishes me and I take it patiently, I do not know that there is anything very manly about that. I have got to take it. But suppose that I do good, and only good, and men lie about me, as they have lied about me in Mansfield a thousand times, and I suffer for it, and bear it patiently, that is walking in the footprints of Jesus Christ. Some men, when they lose their homes, and their money; other men, when they are suffering on account of sickness, try to comfort themselves by saying, well, we must bear the cross. Why, sickness is no cross; financial loss is no cross; a child of the devil can get sick just as well as a Christian. Any child of the devil can lose his money. That is not bearing the cross. I do not believe that one Christian out of a thousand knows what it means to bear the cross. Jesus Christ might have taken His cross and thrown it off His shoulder instead of breaking down, but He bore it, for truth's sake, and for redemption's sake; He bore it because He did right and the sinful world punished Him for it. That is the cross. A man is not bearing the cross of Christ because he is suffering pain; but the man that bears the cross is the man that walks in the footprints of Jesus Christ when the world sneers at him; does right when the world damns him for it; does right when the world persecutes him for it, when he could throw that cross off in a moment if he would only walk with the world. You will never understand what it means to bear the cross until you remember that the world and the flesh are ruled

by the devil and as soon as a man comes out from that government and walks in the footprints of Jesus Christ, the world has no use for him any more, and consequently will scoff, and sneer, and abuse the man of God. And so you never know why so many professed Christians have no cross to bear any more? It is because they are good Christians on Sunday and the devil has no objection to that; they are good Christians on Monday, and the devil has no objection to that; they are good Christians all week if there is nothing special going on, and the devil has no objections to that. The devil is willing that you and I shall be Christians all the days of our lives, providing only for half an hour before we die, or a few minutes every week, we will walk with him. That is all he asks for. And oh, how many preachers of the Gospel there are today, and professed Christians who are big talkers about Christ on Sunday, in the Sunday School class and in the church, but if a band of men goes tramping around on the street with men who have no use for Christ, they will walk right along, and then they talk about bearing the cross. Those men would walk with the devil, no difference where he goes. That is the trouble with Christianity today. You show me a minister of the Gospel, or a Christian layman, who is going to walk right in the footprints of Jesus Christ, no difference what the world says, and I will show you a man that is going to be damned by the world, and that is what it means to walk in the footprints of Jesus Christ, and that is what thousands of professed ministers of the Gospel, and professed Christians absolutely know nothing about today, and that is why we are sometimes misunderstood. Jesus was misunderstood.

The prominent men of the city said, Crucify Him! The prominent men of the city went out and hired men to cry out Crucify Him! Crucify Him! and were going to hang Him on the cross, no difference what He said; and Christ had sense enough to keep silent. "For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned (O God, that they might all return!) unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." You must not only be willing to suffer for Christ's sake if you wish to walk in His footprints, but you must be patient. It is remarkable in the trial of Christ how often He kept perfectly silent. When He was reviled. He reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not, but He committed everything to the Judge of Whom He knew that all things would be judged righteously; and thus you and I must patiently go along, let the world say what it will. Little do I care what any man thinks, just so God knows I am right. What do I care for your opinion,

or for any man's opinion? When God sets me straight I am straight and the whole world cannot throw me over; and thus I say to all of you tonight, get into the footprints of Jesus Christ; walk in that path if you must suffer and bear the cross, and then, when you are in those footprints, bear the suffering patiently. Do all you can for the glory of the Master. Be happy in Him all the days of your life. What was meant by that beautiful verse in this morning's Sunday School lesson: My joy shall be in you, and your joy shall be full? Sometimes people have come to me and sympathized with me because of what the people said, as if they thought I was unhappy. I am never happier than when the devil stirs people up. That convinces me that I have stated some truth, and that convinces me that before Sunday evening God will overrule the devil and bring some man to hear the Gospel and be saved. A young man came to my study this last week and said, "Can I get a copy of your last Sunday's Easter sermon?" "I guess so. Why do you want it?" "I want to see what you really did say about the Presbyterians." I said, "I don't think I honored the Presbyterians enough to say anything about them; however, I did say a few things about the Lutherans; but," I said, "if you will just do two things, you will accommodate me, and that is, in the first place, when you meet these people on the street that tell you these lies, just tell them I said considerable about the Lutherans; and, in the second place, thank them for me for this free advertising; I would be willing to pay them for it." What we want to learn is just to go straight along, tell the truth, and let the world talk. There is always one truth teller to straighten up every liar.

This beautiful story was told and published not long ago, of Sister Dora. Sister Dora, having made a certain mistake in her life, made up her mind that she would just devote the balance of her life to the Lord Jesus Christ, her great Shepherd. So she went to a hospital and asked permission to wait upon the sick, to hand them water when they were thirsty, to give them medicine when they needed it, and to be with them that she might do as Jesus would do. It was not long until they observed that at the head of her bed she had a bell, and that bell was connected with every cot in the hospital, and no difference what time of night it was, the patients would ring the bell and Sister Dora would leap from her bed and give to the one that was thirsty, a drink of water, to another, medicine; for those that were helpless she moved their hands and their feet, bathed their hot faces with the cooling water; and thus she went on day after day, week after week, not

an hour of the night was her own. When her friends came to her and said, How can you stand it? How can you be so patient? How can you be so happy? Oh, said she, I am walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, and every time I hear that little bell I think of that beautiful verse. The Master is come and calleth for thee. Let us rise in prayer.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we pray to Thee to give us the spirit of Sister Dora; help us to be willing to be awakened any hour to do something for our fellow men, that we, too, may walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for a free salvation. We thank Thee for a saving grace and mercy. We thank Thee for restoration and calling back into the footsteps of the great Shepherd. And now, Thou Shepherd of souls, Thou who hast seen us go astray and who hast again brought us back. Oh, take us by Thy hand and lead us day and night in Thy steps. Help, heavenly Father, that the older we grow the nearer we may draw to Thee, the more we may live in the very center of the footsteps of Him who said, Follow Me. Lord, forgive us for straying away from Thee so often, and forgive us for apologizing for our sins. We have sinned against better knowledge. We have known better. We have been reared somewhat better than we have acted. Lord do Thou help that we may now come back to Thee, acknowledging our sins, asking Thy forgiveness, walking in Thy way, calling upon Thee in the language of Thine own prayer:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

30. The Dearly Beloved. *Third Sunday After Easter.*

Dearly Beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward. For this is thankworthy if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongful. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. 1 Peter 2:11-20.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

IT WAS A COMMON EXPRESSION of the great Tertullian that when the world condemns us, God forgives us. It is absolutely impossible for the world and the true Christian church to be at love with each other. We are told distinctly that we are not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world, and the strange thing among many professed Christians in the present day is that they cannot understand at all why there should be any difference between the church and the world; they seem to think that that minister of the Gospel who is not popular with the world is not worth anything, while the truth is that the minister of the Gospel that is popular with the world is not worth having. There must be a strained relation between Christians and the world; there must be a strained relation not only between the church at large and the sinful world, but there must be one between the true Christians

in the church and a false minister of the Gospel. It is absolutely impossible for a man to be in the pulpit, and be a worldly man and not have a strained relation with the people in the church who are true Christians. And it is just as true that a faithful minister of the Gospel cannot live otherwise than in a strained relation between himself and members of the church who are not true Christians. For just as surely as there is a strained relation between the world and the church at large, there must be between the Christian in the pew and the false preacher in the pulpit, as well as between the true preacher in the pulpit and the false Christian in the pew.

While it is true that there must be a strained relation between the world and the church, it is just as true on the other hand, that there must be the most pleasant relation between every true Christian and true Christians; there must be a beautiful relation between the true Christian in the church and every other true Christian in the church. You cannot imagine two true Christians at law with each other; you cannot imagine two true Christians not speaking to each other when the opportunity is given; you cannot imagine two true Christians who would not look at each other. When this is true of Christians in the pew, it is doubly true of a faithful man of God in the pulpit and a faithful Christian in the pew. I maintain that there is no closer relation outside of the family in the world than between a faithful man of God and a faithful people in the church. It is true sometimes it takes a certain amount of time for people to understand each other, but when we have once stood by the bedside of the dying, and when we have once entered into that closer relation that reveals the man to the man, I say the relation of a true servant of God and his people is so intimate that it never ceases. There is something of the foretaste of that relation between Christ and His church when He calls Himself the Bridegroom and His Church the Bride. The apostle Peter has this relation in mind when he addresses the Christians in the heathen land in this general epistle, by the beautiful title, "Dearly beloved." May the Holy Spirit this morning help us to understand what is meant by:

The Dearly Beloved

- I. Who are they?
- II. What must they do?

Are the two questions I desire to answer this morning.

I. Who are these dearly beloved?

In order to get the apostle's answer we must read the previous two verses:

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who bath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Which in time past were not a people but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.”

In these words we have the qualifications of the dearly beloved. In the first place he calls them a chosen generation. The people of God are a chosen people. We call the children of Israel the chosen people. Ever since sin came into the world a man by nature is born in sin and is a child of wrath. In order to belong to the dearly beloved he must be called and chosen as a peculiar generation. Never in the history of the world do we know of a single time that any man got to be a Christian by his birth. The children of Christian parents must be born again just as well as the children who are born of heathen. No man, even John the Baptist himself, could be born a Christian. He had to be born again, and therefore became one of the proclaimers of the means of the new birth.

Not only are we a chosen generation, but as the dearly beloved, we belong to the royal priesthood. In ancient times the priest was considered the highest man in authority. A special family was chosen by the Lord to represent the priesthood. These Christians living in heathen lands, coming from the Jewish race, lay great stress upon the priesthood. They cannot imagine that now that people are born out of heathendom into the Christian church, that they would be on the same parallel with the Jew; nor could they understand how one Christian in the church could be as much a priest as the other. Living in the Old Testament dispensation they had made up their minds that one man, as priest, was far above the others. And do you know that same idea prevails largely today in many Christian churches. How many ministers walk along the street as if to say, I am a greater man than you; I am far above you; while the real truth is that we are all priests, and we are all on the same common level; we are all a royal priesthood.

Jesus is now our King, and as dearly beloved, no one has a right to think himself far above the other, for we are all born in sin and are saved only by the one Redeemer, Jesus Christ, and by the one Holy Spirit who calls and gathers us, and thereby makes us a chosen generation and a royal priesthood.

Who are we, the dearly beloved? Not only are we a chosen generation and a royal priesthood, but an holy nation. A nation is usually judged by its ruler. Any nation that has a Christian ruler is usually classed as a Christian nation. When we talk about our country being a Christian land, we do not mean that every citizen of America is a Christian, but we do rejoice in the fact that we have in the president's chair of this country a man of God; we do rejoice in the fact that we have in the president's chair a man who loves the family, and loves the things that are good and holy, and everything that he says and does is working for the one great object of making this land a Christian land. In this Christian land there may be many heathen; there are many heathen, there are scoffers, but the land as such, the nation is an holy nation, not because we are holy in ourselves, but because we are followers of Him who is holiness Himself, Jesus Christ.

Such are some of the characteristics of the dearly beloved, but the apostle goes on and gives some more.

“A peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

What is there so peculiar about this Christian nation? What is it that makes the Christian peculiar from all other people? Well, his peculiarity lies in this, that he is twice born. A man who is no Christian has only been born once, has only been born of the flesh and is flesh, born into a sinful world and is nothing but a sinner, and all that he does is sin. Whatever is not of faith is sin. Do you know there are many people who seem to think that even ungodly people can do good. It is absolutely impossible in God's sight. A serpent, no difference what he does, is doing the act of a serpent. A man that is born in sin, until he is born again, has no faith in God, and whatever is not of faith is sin. I might possibly illustrate this to a certain extent by saying that if a boy of your family would go and do something very harmful to his own mother, and even deny that his father is his father, that boy might do what he pleased, he could not please that family; that boy

could not do anything in that home that would give pleasure to the parents. How could a boy that slaps his own mother, denies his own father, no difference what he does, do good in that family? now then, a man that is born in sin and not born again is not a child of God, and whatever he does is ungodly, and consequently he does not belong to the peculiar people of the children of God. When this man is born again, then he believes in God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and whatever he does now he does to the glory of God instead of to his own glory, and whatever he does is pleasing to God because it is done by that new birth from on high that makes him a peculiar man, a peculiar Christian, and the Christians together a peculiar people.

Dearly beloved. They have come out of the darkness into the marvelous light; they are living no more the life of sin and Satan, but have come out on the glorious path that leads to heaven. "Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." Isn't that a wonderful statement? The Apostle Peter declares here that there was a time when the people were not a people; that the people of God lived in a time when they were more like brutes than like men; that the people of God lived in a time when they were rightly called Satan's rebels instead of people, and it is not strange that the apostle should speak of this great fact. When God made man He made him in His own image. Now take the image away from man and what is he? He is no more what God made him. The consequence is that God divides the man who is not in the image of Himself from the man who is created in His image, or who, having lost the image, is brought back into that image. What is a man who is not a child of God? He is a rebel against heaven. Not only is he a rebel against heaven, he is a child of the devil, and how can a child of the devil be a child of God? and how can a child of the devil call a child of God brother? or how can a child of God call a child of the devil brother? A man has just as much right to go out and call his horse his brother, and even more so, than he has a child of the devil. Consequently the Apostle Peter says, I want you to understand that the dearly beloved are a people who at one time were not people at all, rebels against heaven; now you are children of God, and consequently the dearly beloved.

Another qualification that he gives to these dearly beloved is that they are strangers and pilgrims.

“I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.”

It does seem to me that that is one of the hardest lessons that some people have to learn, that they are strangers and pilgrims. If strangers here, then this is not our home; if pilgrims here, then this is no place to settle down, and yet how many people there are who are substantially living as if this were their eternal home, and some living as if they were always to stay just where they are. Now a pilgrim moves onward. A stranger thinks of home. How many people there are that have got their minds constantly down on earth and earthly things, so that it becomes necessary for God to come down into our homes and with a terrible blow make us understand what words will never make us understand. I am not speaking now of any special visitation, but simply of the love of Providence that comes into our homes at times and teaches us the great fact that we will learn no other way, that we are strangers and pilgrims here. I know from my own experience that earth is no more to me what it was years ago, and I am satisfied when God comes into your home and takes your only son and lifts him up to heaven, you will learn a lesson that you never knew before, and when He comes into your home and begins to sever ties that have been so sacred, you will find out what the Apostle Peter meant when he said. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. A pilgrim and a stranger is one who should never be burdened. How many people there are that are burdening themselves in this world, and consequently make no progress. If I were to show you today a man who intended to go to California tomorrow morning, if I were to show you that man down here along the Pennsylvania railroad filling a whole freight car with all of his wealth because he wants to take a trip to San Francisco, you would say that man is a fool. If he wants to go on a visit as a pilgrim to California he does not want to take a whole freight load along. On the other hand, if I show you another man this morning who is ready to start for California, and you ask him. Have you got your ticket? No. Any money? No. Going to take anything with you? No. You would say, there is another fool. The one wants to go, taking nothing; the other wants to go and take everything with him. They do not know that nothing is a burden, on the one hand, and too much a burden on the other. The man who is a pilgrim on this earth must learn the great lesson that he does not want to take too many

trunks, nor too many satchels, nor to start with empty pockets. Consequently if we want to be pilgrims and strangers here on earth, and live the life of the dearly beloved, we have got to take our minds off of the wealth of the world as if that were our God; and on the other hand, stop living that kind of a life that makes us so poor that we do not know how we are going to pay the next grocery bill. We have got to stop living that kind of a life that when old age comes will leave us at the mercy of other people, but do as God taught us, work and save and pray, and just have enough to keep us comfortable, and do not take so much that it will be a burden, and in that way remember that our home is not on earth, but on high, and as pilgrims and strangers here on earth remember that we are the dearly beloved.

II. What Should They Do?

Having defined who these dearly beloved are, let us notice, What should they do? I would answer on the authority of my text that these pilgrims and strangers, these dearly beloved should fight a noble fight for the purity of the home.

“I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.”

The Apostle Peter did not say, Dearly beloved, you will have no fleshly lusts; he did not say, When you are saved you will have no battles to fight any more. We sometimes hear Christians talking as if they had no temptations any more, and when we hear that we are almost led to say, I wish you would take your wings and fly to heaven. The real fact is that we who are here upon earth are still living in our fleshly bodies, and the man or woman who has a good deal of brain and intelligence has the hardest battle to fight, and the thing for us as pilgrims and strangers to remember is that it is not an easy thing to live a Christian life; it is not an easy thing to be pure hearted, and the battle that we must fight and fight hard is to be pure ourselves, in thought, in mind, in order that we may not disgrace the home of which we are a part. The man who wants purity of home must first of all see to it himself that he is pure hearted and a Christian, and as I said before,

this can only be done by a prayerful life, asking God to give us grace for every hour and strength for every moment. Therefore I would say this morning, as dearly beloved do not imagine that you are going to get through life without any struggles, and do not imagine that it will not take a bitter fight to live aright. I know from my life that I have fought the fight of purity, and I know that speaking from the world's standpoint I have no disgrace hanging back of me. It takes a battle for purity, a battle for the purity of the home, a battle for the purity of the nation; and I would say right here, dear Christian friends, do not think it is smart to let your little boy and girl play beaux too young; they will play you to shame some of these days. Do not imagine that we can go right through this life and that everything is all right because it is style and tolerated. For my part I pray and beg for the purity of our children, and for the purity of our home, and in order to have pure homes we must have pure fathers, and pure mothers, and pure daughters, and we must have the arms of love and protection thrown around every one, and pray God that when the temptation is the greatest the opportunity may be the least, even then we pray God to remove the temptation. Yes, there is a battle on hands for the dearly beloved.

Not only must we pray and fight for the salvation of souls and purity of the home, but we must aim to be good citizens. Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. We cannot overlook the fact that we are here for good citizenship, and any professed Christian who does not remember at the polls as well as in his daily life that it is his duty to speak and vote for the welfare and the purity of the nation, is not a good citizen. We ought to remember, my friends, as dearly beloved, that Caesar is always a heathen, no difference where you look in the world. I know that Caesar stands for ruler, but it stands for more than that; it stands for government in all its ramifications, and the government of every nation on earth as long as the world stands will be Caesar – will be heathen. These professed Christians were Jewish Christians, living in a heathen land, and they supposed they would have no right now to obey a heathen king, that their privilege was to obey the Lord as King of kings and Lord of lords, and to treat their under-

subjects and governors as they pleased. Dear friends, the Apostle Peter calls their attention to the fact that government is of God, and that no difference if the government does make a mistake, it is to be honored and respected, and as good citizens we must obey the laws. If the laws are bad, full obedience to the laws will overthrow them; if good they must be obeyed. Any law except that absolutely contrary to the plain command of God must be obeyed for conscience' sake, and must be obeyed for the government's sake. Therefore let us remember that as dearly beloved we must be true citizens in this heathen land, the world. By our good works we must give an answer to the Gentiles. They will find fault with us, but the best answer you can give is to live a Godly life.

Not only are we to be good citizens, but we are to be faithful servants. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men; as free and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward. How often we find that young men think they are really to be the boss in a factory instead of obeying the foreman. How often in the home we find people who seem to think that the servant is the master, and the master and mistress are the servants. If there is any one thing that God wanted to teach us in the fourth commandment and throughout the Word, it is this, that the employed is to be obedient to the employer; that the servant is to be true to the master, and what a rebellion we are creating in our own country by thinking that a man is considered great when he stands up and says, I will let no man boss me. The real truth is that any man can be stubborn, and stubbornness is no proof of greatness. An animal not long ago went out on the railroad track when an engine was coming along, and scratched the dust, and pawed, and said, Engine, get off the track. Well, the engine simply knocked him off. That animal was an emblem of the stubborn man that stands in the world and says, I will see whether I will be subject to any one. It is manly to be obedient. It is manly to give service; and there is no nobler work in all the world than to be a noble servant. The president of the United States is not our ruler; he is our servant. He is serving the people of the United States, and they that send him are greater than he that is sent. The people of the United States are greater than the president. The servant in the home by his obedience makes himself great. The scholar in the school that

will rebel against a teacher, or a principal, or a superintendent, has had bad training at home. Honor those that are placed over you, is the commandment of our God. Let us learn, therefore, as dearly beloved, that the true mark of greatness is obedience to those who are placed over us.

Not only should we remember this as the dearly beloved, but we should also remember that the privilege of liberty is sometimes overstepped. "As free and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God." There was a time in my own history when I was taught by the actions of many people that whenever we have got the liberty to do a thing, we must do it, in spite of what anybody thinks. I have seen men who were good, professed Christians, that just because somebody thought it was wrong to drink whisky, would go and buy some and stand up and drink it, to show they had the liberty. I have seen men who, just because they were told not to do certain things, to give offense, would do them, just to show that they had the liberty to do them. Sometimes it becomes absolutely necessary to show that we have got the liberty to do certain things, but let us not forget that we are taught not to offend each other, and that it is absolutely wrong for every man to go to the limit of his liberty, because right at the edge of his liberty begins the liberty of the next man. John B. Goff, that great temperance lecturer, used to stand on the platform and show the difference between real liberty and assumed liberty. He said, "I as a man have a perfect right to stand here and strike from my shoulder, and this is my liberty; but if a man is standing within half a foot of me and I strike his nose, my liberty ends where his nose begins." That shows just exactly what liberty means. Your liberty stops where the next man's liberty begins, and there are some people who imagine that no difference how long their arms are, they can strike where they please. As dearly beloved you must remember that this world is full of men besides yourself, full of people who have their rights as you have yours, and that your rights must end where the next man's rights begin, and as dearly beloved I would urge upon you strongly never to forget that kindness goes a great deal further than force. During the French war there was a noble pastor by the name of Machtolph, living in the town of Moetlingen of Wuertemberg. This noble pastor was visited by some soldiers of the army with the view of ransacking the parsonage and robbing him of what he had. Instead of standing out on the porch with weapons to defend his home, he unlocked the house, unlocked every trunk and chest, threw open the whole residence and said. Walk in

and help yourselves. They went through the house, surprised at the privilege, took everything they could lay their hands on, and started away. They met the general of the army and told him the wonderful story of a man back there in the church parsonage who did as just described. "Why," the general said, "I will have to see that man." He took three or four of his men with him, walked into the open house and said, "Is there anything else here that we can get?" "Only one thing that I know of," he said, "there is a piece of linen hanging out on the line but it isn't quite dry; if you will just wait a little, you can have that too." Then they started off. He happened to think after they started that he had two silver spoons hid. He got them and ran after the general and said, "I beg your pardon, I still have two silver spoons, and here is one of them."

"No, I will not take it."

"Yes, you must take it as a souvenir of what you have done this morning." He took the spoon and went to the army. They began to talk this matter over. There were members of this pastor's church present, and they told the story of that great man of love, until the soldiers said, "Everything that we took must go back," and they carried back his silver spoon and all that they had taken, and regarded him very highly. In other words, this man Machtolph conquered a whole army by just simply telling them, "Here is the house, take all that you want if you think it is right." He did more than an army could have done. He was the victor and they were the conquered. Let us learn that true liberty consists in letting people sometimes do the sinful, damnable thing, that they may see their own wickedness, repent, and come back to God.

Last of all I would say that as dearly beloved, we must walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. This text, as you will notice, is from the same chapter as the one delivered last Sunday, *In His steps*. The verse just referred to shows us how we should walk: "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God culture grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." Do well, no difference what it costs; suffer for it though wrongfully, and walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. This is acceptable to the Father in heaven. As dearly beloved we must walk in the footsteps of Jesus. If you do wrong and are punished for it, that is right, that is nothing to boast of, but when you do right, when you know that you do

right, and you suffer for it, as Jesus did, carrying His cross to Calvary, as Jesus did when He bled and died, that is Christian, and that is the thing that God will bless in this world.

The following little notice, taken from our Sunday School lesson of last week illustrates what I want to say: Not long ago a fire broke out in a Formosan village and two houses were soon wrapped in flames. One of them was saved – the house of a heathen Chinaman; the owner of the other house is a Christian, who happened to be away from home, and, as nobody tried to save his house, it was burned down. There was a great laughter among the villagers at the Christian's misfortunes. "That is the worth of your religion," they said to him. A day or two after a company of men were seen coming across the fields, and, when they got near, it was seen that they were laden with tools, wood and articles of furniture. The village was astir. What was it? Who were the men? They were the members of the church to which their neighbor belonged, and they had come from their homes, some miles away, to rebuild his house, which they did, while the villagers gasped with wonder. Nothing like it had ever been seen. Such a religion could not be laughed at.

Here you find a picture of the love of the brotherhood. The Apostle Peter said, "Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king." As dearly beloved then we must love each other, stretch out our hands and help each other in time of need. We must not forget the poor box. For some time nothing has been said about that, but we still have men lying at the point of death, earning no money, no income. I have now a letter in my study which reads like this, in substance: "I am very sorry that I must ask for help. This is the first time in twelve years that we have not had plenty in our home, but with my sick husband lying at the point of death, the children hungry, and no way to earn anything myself, I must ask you for help." My dear friends, is there one of us this morning that has not the inclination to help one in that condition? The next time it may be you, it may be me; and when I am lying helpless in my home and cannot do anything to support my wife and children, I want you to help me. May God help us this morning as dearly beloved, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer

O Father in heaven, we thank Thee for Thy blessed Word, each verse of which is full of fruit and we shake it with prayer until it falls into our hands. Do Thou help us to read Thy Word with the view to finding new promises and dwelling more meditatively on the old. There are truths in Thy Word which we have never yet discovered; there are fruits there for our souls that we have never yet tasted. Lord God, do Thou bless the Word as it has been preached today, and the hands that have recorded this message, and may the message go forth, leading many people to their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to walk in His footsteps, and to live for the happiness and the good of their fellowmen, and to the glory of their Master, who taught us to pray: Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

31. Do Not Err. *Fourth Sunday After Easter.*

Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. James 1:16-21.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THERE IS A LATIN PHRASE, dear friends, that has been translated into all the languages of the world: *Errare humanum est*, or rather. *To err is human*, and usually that phrase is quoted to show us that after all a little error does not amount to much because it is human. I wish to show you in the very beginning this evening in this discourse, that an error is an awful thing. There was a time when an angel in heaven for the first time rebelled against God. Among the angels it may have been called only an error, but that little error made the devil out of that angel, and that devil meant hell, and that hell meant eternal punishment for all who are not saved. That is the result of a little error, so called.

Let me show you another error. When Eve took the forbidden fruit, it looked like a very small thing. I suppose by a great majority of the votes in the world it would be declared just a little mistake, but that forbidden fruit led her away from God, led her to lose the image, and led her to lead astray her husband, and she ruined the human race, planted the seed of death, dug every grave, started every sickness that has ever been in the world, made it necessary to have hospitals for the wounded and groaning, and has been the

means of putting people on the path that leads to eternal damnation, all the result of one little error.

Let me call your attention to another error. A little boy starts to a Sunday School in the country for the first time; as a stranger in that neighborhood he is honored by being elected treasurer of that Sunday School. He felt proud of the office and had a perfect right to feel so. It is always an honor to be elected treasurer of anything. The little boy went home that day with one hundred pennies in the treasury; he felt as rich and as elevated as the treasurer of Richland county, or treasurer of the State of Ohio, or of the United States. When the mother one day wanted some change, she said, "Let me have fifty cents of your pennies;" the little boy said "All right;" the father said, "Mother, you are making a mistake; that is not John's one hundred cents; that is trust money; you have got absolutely no right to borrow that fifty cents; the best thing you can do is to leave them where they are, or to give John half a dollar in exchange for the fifty pennies." But the mother thought she knew better than her husband did and so she borrowed the fifty pennies, with a view of paying them back. Little John went out that morning and said, "If mother can borrow fifty cents, I will borrow the other fifty and spend them." The year passed on and there were about \$25.00 expected in that treasury, but when they came to settle up the account, little John, rather than to confess that he had no money – for he borrowed the one hundred cents every Sunday after that – simply ran away. The next thing we knew he was in a new neighborhood, and here again was trusted with a little more money, and he borrowed it with the view of paying it back, just like mother did. That same boy is in the Reformatory at Mansfield today; and who put him there? His own mother. You have absolutely no right to take one cent that belongs to a trust fund and not hold it for that trust. Only a little mistake, but it put that boy behind the walls of the Reformatory. I want you to understand, my friends, that an error is a terrible thing. The apostle James recognized this fact when he said, Do not err, my beloved brethren. Last Sunday I told you who the beloved brethren were; today I admonish you in the name of the Holy Spirit that you be careful and:

Do Not Err

According to this text it is an error

- I. To be too slow.
- II. To be too swift.

I. To Be Too Slow

“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.”

It is an error to be too slow. Many a man has simply failed in his life because he is always just a little bit too slow. We are told in this Word tonight that a man should be swift to learn that evil does not lie in nature but in man himself. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights. Notice well, dear friends, that James declares here that every good thing, no difference where it is found, every creature of God, comes from the heavenly Father, and that it is a mistake to think, as some people do, that evil lies in the very nature of all things. Human philosophy tells us, when it tries to get away from the true and living God, and away from the Bible, that evil lies right in the nature of things. If that were true, there would be just as much evil in the flower and the dew drop as there is in the devil, himself. No, my friends, do not err. Evil lies in Satan and man, and you cannot find it anywhere else. The good-hearted mother who rolls the barrel of whiskey out of the saloon and knocks the head in, imagines she is doing the right thing. There is more devil in the hand that holds the hatchet than there is in the barrel. It is simply an error. There are thousands of fools today called Christians who try to excuse man by throwing the responsibility on God, as if God made a mistake when He gave us those things that can be turned into alcohol. You can go down here to any street in this city and fill any saloon with all the whiskey, and with all the beer, and with all the wine, and with all the stinking tobacco, all the poisonous cigarettes, and strychnine and arsenic, and all the poison you can find, and drive the men out, and lock the doors, and I can prove by a vote of all the intelligent men in the world that there is no evil in that building. I shall repeat myself. Fill any building in the world with everything you can find outside of the devil and man, and I will show you a building that contains no evil. On the other hand, you show me a big building, totally vacant; roll out all the whiskey, all the beer, all the wine, all the tobacco and poison, and fill it up with men and women, and I will show you a building

that is full of evil. Do not err. There is evil in the world, but, my friends, that evil is not in wheat, it is not in corn, it is not in medicine; it is in man. The apostle did not fail to tell them where to find the bad. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed; then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. There is no trouble to find where evil is. If you want to find it, lift up your hand and lay it upon your own breast and you are pretty close to it. Evil is in the heart of man. Why, you say, I am a Christian. Granted that you are a Christian. If you are a Christian, you are a Christian living in a sinful body, and while it is true that the spiritual man does not sin, it is just as true that the spiritual man lives in a carnal man, and when the spiritual man says, I want to do right, the carnal man says, I want to do wrong, and in the Christian there is a battle, while in the child of the devil there is no battle at all. The one is a Christian because he has the spiritual man in him, the other is a child of the devil because he is all devilish. Do not err. Do not try to shift your responsibility on to a barrel of whiskey. Do not try to shift your responsibility upon a little bottle of medicine. Stop this cry against the creature inanimate, and cry out against devilish men and women, who do not try to do right and do not want to do right. If the people would all do as I do, and as hundreds of members of this church do, there would be no saloons. The saloons are in this city because not only devilish people want them, but because professed Christians want them. And whenever the men of God, so called, will take a stand against things that are wrong, and uphold things that are right, there will be a power in every community that today is not recognized. Do not err, beloved brethren.

Again, I would have you not to be too slow, but be very swift to find out that God is unchangeable. The Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Some people seem to think that God was one kind of a God in the days of Abraham, and still another kind of a God in the days of Noah, and then became a different kind of a God in the days of Israel, and then in the days of Christ became a little better, and now during these latter days is getting better still, as if God were changeable. Dear friends, God is not changeable. It is said here, In Him is no variableness neither shadow of turning. Men were saved in the beginning of the world exactly as they are saved today, and exactly as they

will be saved on the last great day. Adam and Eve had the promise that they would be saved by the seed of the woman that should crush the serpent's head, and that promise was of Jesus Christ on Calvary. On the day that Jesus Christ was crucified, that man by His side was saved by the cross. Abraham looked forward to the cross; the malefactor looked to his side for the cross, and you and I look back for the cross, and we are all saved by the unchangeable God. Hannah prayed for her son, Samuel, and God gave him to her. In the days of John the Baptist Zacharius and Elizabeth prayed for a son, and God gave them that wonderful prophet, yea, greater than a prophet, he who touched the Savior with his own hands, and today God will do the same thing. He is unchangeable. You look at yonder sun tomorrow and watch it for an hour, and you cannot see that it is moving. Just keep your eye on yonder sun and it seems to stand perfectly still in the heavens; but go out into the field and walk up to that tall oak tree, sit down by the shadow, take your pencil and set it just at the edge of that shadow, at the end of it, you will see the shadow moving along, away from that pencil. The shadow moves, but, says this great apostle, do not err; you can set your pencil where you please on God's Word, and you will find that the shadow never moves. With whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Do not err. The same God that demanded a flood because the world was wicked, is the same God before whom you will stand on the great Judgment Day. Do not err and think that God has changed his mind. Why, you say, did God not sometimes make changes? Yes, God never changed His will, but He willed the change. Do you see the difference? You cannot find from the beginning of God's Word to the end that He ever changed His mind, that He ever changed His will, but He did will changes. If it were not for that we would always have sunshine; we would never have any rain. In the great plan of God's Providence, He has not only drawn back the black cloud, but the shining stars; He has not only given us the dark and lowering clouds, and thunder and lightning, but He has given us the cooling breeze and sweet flowers, and things that are beautiful. All these are coming, not because God changes His will, but because He wills changes. Do not err. The God of Abraham is our God tonight and will be our Judge on the last great day.

Again, I would have you not to be too slow, but be swift to learn that a saved sinner is one of God's most wonderful creatures. Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures. What beautiful world this must have been on the morning of

creation! I would love to have seen that garden of Eden when Adam and Eve walked with God, and He walked with them. The world is so beautiful now that a man must be an ignoramus, and lost to all sense of beauty if his mind is not lifted heavenward as he comes in contact with nature. How any man can waken at four o'clock in the morning and hear the little birds out in the trees praising God, and then lie there without praying, I do not understand. It seems to me that God has planted right in the mouth of the little bird the doxology which we sing:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host!
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost!

How a man can travel over this beautiful earth, with the fine foliage on the trees and the beautiful grass and flowers, and the sweet perfumery that comes from all the fields, a promise of the future harvest; how any man can look up into the skies at night and see those starry windows; how any man can enjoy the sunlight by day and its borrowed light by night from the beautiful moon; how any man can look at this sin-cursed earth as it is with all its grandeur and beauty, and not be lifted heavenward, is a demonstration of the fact that he is an ignoramus. What must this world have been before the curse was on it! What a beautiful world it must have been, that garden of Eden! Now, my friends, though man has fallen and has by nature become an enemy of God, though man has turned his face away from his Maker, and has gone down to destruction, James tells us that God can take that man, drunken sot that he is, low man that he is, cursed, lost man that he is, and devilish as he is, and with this Word of truth He can recreate him, regenerate him, hold him up and make out of him what is a veritable fruit of the garden of Eden. Wonderful demonstration of the power of God! Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures. I believe the apostle James had in mind the fruit that was hanging on the trees in the garden of Eden before Adam sinned, and then stopped to think what God had done with him and with so many people. My friends, I tell you this evening, come and see. One of the best demonstrations of the power of God to me is the fact that in my own ministry I can look into the faces of hundreds of men and women that were going to destruction, and the plain Word of God as taught in the Lutheran

church, brought them back and made them like fruit hanging on the trees in the garden of Eden. Come and see! I want no stronger proof of the power of God's Word than the fact that it takes a man and makes a new creature of him. What more do you want? Do not err and say Christianity is all a sham. Do not stand on the side of the devil and argue against your own conscience, by trying to put yourself asleep with the thought that there are preachers that go wrong, and Sunday School teachers that go wrong, and professed Christians that go wrong. I say do not put your conscience to sleep with that kind of nonsense and sometimes veritable lies. There are men in Mansfield who will make the bold declaration that there are no good women any more, and that there are no good men any more. When a man tells me there are no good moral men I say he lies and he knows it. When a man tells me there are no good women, I say he lies and he knows it. The world is full of virtuous women and full of good men, and the only man that thinks everybody is bad, is a devilish man, himself, and he knows it. Do not err, beloved brethren. Suppose that I, myself, should go wrong and go to the devil, what good will that do you when I gnash my teeth at you in hell and you gnash yours at me? What comfort is that to a lost man to know that another soul is lost? Do not err, beloved brethren. There is a God in heaven before whom you and I must stand, and He has not changed as much as the shadow of the tree in the noon hour.

Do not be too slow, dear hearers, but be swift to hear God's Word. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be swift to hear. Some people are very slow to hear. I suppose some of you men were sleeping this morning when you ought to have been in God's house. You are very slow to hear God's message. Who knows but that God prepared a special message for you, and you were not here to hear it, nor anywhere else. What right have you got to transgress the very day that God set apart for you to hear His message? Oh, how many people there are who could be in the Sunday school class, but they are too slow! How many people there are that could hear the sermon every Sunday, but they are too slow! How many people there are that are very glad they are in a business that gives them an excuse not to hear God's Word; and there is a great deal of business done on Sunday that had better not be done. These Italian stands ought to be closed up on Sunday, and a good deal of other business ought to be closed on Sunday. I do not believe that any man under heaven ever did prosper because he disobeyed God's Holy law. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. They used to think

they could never get along without an open barber shop on Sunday. They are all closed now and men are shaved just as well as they were then. They used to think that the grocery had to be open until ten o'clock on Sunday morning. They are closed now and we have just as much to eat Sundays as we did before. The time will come when the drug stores will be closed on Sunday, and there are people who think if they were closed all the time, we would not have so many funerals. Now I do not say that it may never be necessary to get into some kinds of business on Sunday sometimes, but there is always a right way of doing it. I do want to say here tonight that the man that does not hear God's Word often on Sunday and in his own home, is making an eternal mistake. A poor shepherd in France, who had all that he could possibly do, seemingly, to keep his poor family from starving, had no Bible. The prayer of his life was, Oh, that I could just get hold of God's Word! and by practicing strict economy, he finally had enough money saved to buy an old, second-hand Bible; then he took it home and felt rich, and his family was rich, and they read in that Word every day together, and sang a hymn of praise, and one day when he was reading the last line on the right-hand page, and turned the leaf, there seemed to be no connection whatever between the two sentences. He leafed back and forth a few times, and said, Surely there is a leaf lost, and then accidentally it was observed by one of the family that the two leaves were sticking together. He took his knife from the side of his plate, ran it between the two leaves, and carefully opened them, and lo, and behold, he found a hundred dollars in money lying between those two leaves. Then he felt that possibly he would be considered a thief if he would tell the world that he found a hundred dollars in an old book, but he picked up a little note upon which he read: "This Bible I purchased long ago, when I was poor; God blessed me and I got rich, but my heirs are not worthy of what I have. I now seal these hundred dollars in this Bible, and whoever gets it and reads this Book shall find them and they shall be his." Then this poor shepherd knelt down with his family and thanked God that by reading the Word he not only found \$100 in money between the pages, but found something worth more than a hundred dollars on every page of that great Book. It was the beginning of his financial blessing, and it was to his soul a spiritual blessing, even to rob his family of bread to buy the old Bible. Now, dear friends, do you realize tonight that \$100 might be in your Bibles for a long time before you would find them? Do you realize as you are sitting before me tonight that we very

often find fault with the Roman Catholics because they read the Bible so little, and yet they are taught not to read the Bible in their homes, because of the fact that they cannot interpret it as the priests can; while Protestants are urged to read the Bible, and I am not saying too much when I say that the average Roman Catholic in this civilized land knows as much about his Bible as the average Protestant, and it is a shame that we are letting the old Word of God lie at home week after week and never look inside of it. It is a shame that professed Christians have no family worship. Oh, shame on you! How God can bless that home, I do not understand. Then open the Word of God. Read a chapter every morning. Sing a song of praise to your heavenly Father. Start out in your business with a prayer to God, and I want to tell you that life will be something new, and a glorious home you will have, and your influence in your community will mean something. God forbid that some people should follow in the footsteps of some members of some churches. Let us be very careful not to err.

II. To Be Too Fast

We are not only to avoid the error of being too slow, but just as much so in being too fast. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak. Do not be too swift with your tongue. Did it ever occur to you, my friends, that God gave you two ears to hear, and only one tongue to speak? Did it ever occur to you that when a certain building in a city is surrounded by a high wall, and with two sets of gates, that that means silence in that house? Did it ever occur to you that when God made you, He gave you two ears to listen and only one tongue to speak, and put around that tongue two gates called lips, and around that tongue a double fence of ivory teeth, that you might be careful not to speak too much? Do you know that this Word of God tells you that you must give an account for every idle word? If there is one verse more than another in the Bible that condemns me, it is that one. Oh, what an account I will have to give on the Judgment Day! And yet how much foolish talk there is, and not only talk, but talk against the Word of God. James has in mind the average layman who will rebel against the message that he hears. It may be that you are in just that mood right now, that you would like to say something back against what you have heard tonight, and yet in your own conscience and soul you know

that every word I have said is true. Now be careful, and do not talk back too soon. Go home and think. Go home and pray. Go home and meditate and keep that fence closed a day or two. Shut up the gates. Listen. Because just as sure as you talk too soon you will make a fool of yourself. Be swift, therefore, on the one hand, and slow on the other.

Be careful not to err in another respect. That is, do not be swift to get angry. Slow to wrath. I do not know of anything that will make a fool of a man any quicker than when he lets his temper run away with him. A temper is a blessed thing. An engine may be ever so perfect, it never will run unless there is some fire and some steam to make it go, and a man that has no temper is just a poor machine that is not worth anything; but when he has a temper he ought to have a governor, a controlling power; he ought to be able to say, I will hold my tongue until I can keep cool. It was a rule of Caesar to always count twenty before he said a word if he felt angry. It was a rule of a great theologian to pray the Lord's prayer every time he felt that he was getting angry. It was the rule of a great philosopher to say the alphabet forward and backward before he said a word when he felt angry. Whatever rule you may adopt, do not allow yourself to plunge into anger and do in a moment what years of regret can never undo. Do not err. Do not think it is manly to grow angry. There are plenty of animals all around us that can get angry and bite and kick, but there is nothing manly about them, and nothing manly about any man who allows his temper to swell, and then begins to rave and appear more like a brute than a man. Be slow to get angry.

Again, a man must not be too swift to plunge into things that are filthy. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness. There are so many filthy things around us; so many filthy conversations; so many filthy actions. Oh, do not plunge into things that are not clean. It seems to me there is one thing that every Christian ought to lay down as the principle of his life, and that is if the conversation is not clean, walk away from it. If the habit you have got is not clean, then walk away from it. As I walked into the jail the other morning, in order to take a young man out of there, a young man of about twenty-five years came to the door and spit right over on my shirt bosom, and said "Excuse me!" Twenty years ago I would have excused him in a hurry, but I did think, with all the calmness that I have now, that the man ought to be clean. What right has a man got to carry around in his mouth a filthy thing like that, that must make him excuse himself for spitting? Why not keep

clean? Why slop all over your own shirt bosom or anybody's else? Why form a habit that would not be allowed in decent society? Why smell like a stinking pool? Keep clean. The apostle says, be careful not to plunge into filthiness. Lay apart all filthiness.

Not only all filthiness, but he says be swift not to plunge into meanness. "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness." We say of the child when it gets to be angry, you naughty child, and yet there are things done by men that cannot be termed anything but low and mean. Oh, man, how can you, having a Christian wife at home, and dear little children that look into your face to lead them rightly, how can you be away from home every evening of the week and be where you would not take your family with you, and spend your money there and let your children starve? Oh, you mean, filthy scoundrel, how can you go on and live that way? Do not err. Stop plunging into these mean things. Come out and be a man and stand up for your family and for your children. If a dog were found out in the street cursing and swearing, every gun would be leveled at him. Shoot him down! He is possessed of the devil! And yet the very men who hold the weapons in their hands will stand on the street and curse and swear and damn, and think it is manly. Oh, the meanness of the human heart when it is not given to the Lord! The apostle tells us here to be swift, to stay out of that filthiness, and out of that naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls.

The Church of old called this Sunday *Cantata* – the Latin term for singing, and the reason they called it that was that in the old church on the fourth Sunday after Easter they always began by singing the 98th Psalm: O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvelous things: His right hand and His holy arm, hath gotten Him the victory! I say from the time the church sang this 98th Psalm until today, you will find in your hymnbook that this Sunday is called Cantata – Sing unto the Lord a new song – and it does seem to me that this church, if any church on earth, ought to sing. Do you realize, as a member of the First Lutheran Church, how you have been blessed from the time that Father Ruth came here to preach the Gospel until the present day? Do you stop to realize that in seventy long years you have only had about nine pastors, and that of all those that have been here, you have not had one who has not been faithful unto death? Not one has disgraced you. You cannot say that of all churches that have been in existence seventy years. Do you appreciate the fact that for seventy long

years God's eternal truth which you have heard tonight has been sounding in the hearts of your fathers, and of your mothers, and into the hearts of your children, and that up to your last pastor you have had as faithful pastors as any church could have? Do you realize tonight that you have as faithful a superintendent as any church in the State of Ohio? Do you realize tonight that you have sixty faithful teachers in this Sunday school who are working hand in hand to educate your children on the narrow way? Do you realize tonight that you have a church council, for two and a half years at least, and possibly throughout many years of the past, that has never had one unkind word but the Spirit of God in our midst? Do you realize that in our teachers' meetings we have a wonderful blessing from the Spirit of God on high? Do you realize that we have a Young Peoples' Society in which every heart and every hand is in harmony with the one great purpose of giving glory to God? Now, my dear friends, if we do not sing here in a church like this, where shall they sing? If hearing the mighty Word of God as plain as you have heard it tonight, as you always hear it, isn't enough to move you to buy a little hymnbook for one dollar and ten cents to praise God, then pray tell me, what will move you? Friends, I am in earnest about the singing in this church. If the old shepherd of Israel could pen a Psalm of praise like the 98th Psalm; if the church of old could not begin worship without everybody singing that Psalm, in these days of music, in these days of cheap books, why should any man on earth call himself a Christian and sit down like a block and never open his mouth to sing a song of praise to God? Someone says. What is the difference whether we sing or not? The difference is simply this: that if you have your heart filled with the seed that is in this Word, you will be filled with prayer, and if you are filled with prayer you will want to pray along with the Church of God, whether you have a voice to sing or not. You say that some cannot sing. What does singing mean? Singing means to give praise to God. Can't you do that? If I were a woman and hadn't enough money to buy a hymnbook, I would sell those old umbrellas called hats and get one. If I were a man and could not afford to buy a hymnbook, I would go out and say to the world. Give me \$1.10, I want to buy a hymnbook. There is a good deal said about poverty, but I see people that do not give one cent to the First Lutheran Church sit down there at Kaler's and eat ice cream every week. I see these things and know you do not need them; I do not say you should not have them, but do your duty to God first. I urge upon you to make not only this Sunday a

cantata, but to make your life a cantata. In the days of the Reformation, Luther, it is said by Carlisle, sang the truth into Germany. And that means that our Sunday school books should have hymns that will not move the children at once to begin to move their feet as if to dance, but we ought to have hymnbooks with the old glorious songs that mean worship, and lead people to a truer idea of what it means to sing praise to God. It does mean that if any church on earth ought to be a singing church, it is the First Lutheran Church of Mansfield. May God bless these words tonight and stir us up to a better praise to Him, and to be much swifter to do Tight and much slower to do wrong.

Prayer

O Father in heaven, we ask Thy divine blessing tonight to rest upon the message of the hour. We pray Thee, O God, that Thou wilt take these words, which are words from Thy great Word, and teach us to be careful not to err. A little mistake on the part of an angel meant a devil; a little mistake on the part of a woman meant the ruined world; a little mistake in many of our lives has meant many a sorrow and many a tear, and we pray Thee that Thou wilt help us tonight to watch the fountain lest the stream be filthy, and therefore we cry out to create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew right spirits within us. We ask Thee, heavenly Father, that Thou wilt teach us all to teach Thy Word, to be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath, that we may give an account of every word. Hear this our prayer and help us now to utter words that we never need to give an account of because they are the words of our Savior, and the words of the sweetest prayer ever offered by man to God:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day. our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

32. Three Kinds Of Hearers And Two Kinds Of Religion. *Fifth Sunday After Easter.*

But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this. To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. James 1:22-27.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THERE ARE MANY SERMONS in this text instead of one, and my object shall be not to see how much I can say, but how little. There are many kinds of faith in the world, but there are only two kinds of religion, and it is to these three kinds of hearers and two kinds of religion that I this morning call your attention. May the Holy Spirit apply this message deeply to the hearts of all of us, to lead us into the true doctrinal and the practical part of true Christianity. We find then in this text:

Three Kinds Of Hearers And Two Kinds Of Religion

I. What Are These Three Kinds Of Hearers?

1. Those Who Never Hear God's Word

There are some men who never hear God's Word. There are people in this world who never heard the one Book of God at all. There are two books in which we can read the wonderful characteristics of our God. The one is the book of nature, and the other is the Book of Revelation. Every man on earth has the book of nature lying before him. Every man can see its open pages this morning as they lie open before us on the hills and in the valleys. Every man at night can look up and see the golden alphabet of the stars of the universe; but with all of this great book before us, there are people who have never heard of God's Word.

Think of the millions of heathen this morning that never heard a word out of the Bible! Think of the poor souls groveling in darkness that never heard of the sweet song of the cross of Christ! that never heard of the Prince of Peace! Think of the millions that never heard of the one way to heaven, that never knew of such a thing as the Holy Ghost, that never knew of such a thing as a Sunday School, who never have heard how poor sinners, lost and condemned, can be saved. Oh, the poor hearers who never heard God's Word! And yet God put these ears in our heads for the very purpose that we might hear, and said: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear – not the song of the birds, not the music of the air – but first of all, the Word of God.

There are some then who never hear God's Word; there are others who do not want to hear it, those that have the opportunity. We are told in John 3 of some people who cannot bear the light: And this is the condemnation, that light is come into this world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. It may be that I have some one sitting before me that does not love to go to church, that does not really love to hear God's Word. Why? Pray tell me why do you not love to hear God's Word? I will tell you why. There is a something about your life that you would prefer to keep in the dark instead of letting the light of God's Word shine on it. What a blessing it is you are here this morning, and may the Word of God shine in on your souls this morning ever hereafter to make you love to hear it, for just as sure as a man does not want to hear God's Word any more there is something wrong about his heart; something wrong about his life; something wrong about him that he wants to keep in the dark and feels better when his conscience is not stirred up.

We have, therefore, not only those who do not want to hear God's Word, but we have got some also who have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost and never want to hear it. The Lord Jesus Christ told us that every sin could be forgiven except the sin against the Holy Ghost. The author of the letter to the Hebrews calls attention to that sin in Heb. 6:4-6: For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. Dear friends, the Jews committed the awful crime of nailing Christ to the cross, with the assistance of the Romans, but I want to say that from the day they nailed Him to the cross, they never said. We will crucify Him again; but the man that heard God's Word, and has tasted salvation, and knows the whole truth, has been enlightened, born again, has seen and received everything that God could give him, when that man turns away from God, he not only has crucified Christ, but has taken Him off of the cross, put Him in the grave, and when He arose from the dead caught Him the second time and nailed Him to the cross again. The man that has committed the sin against the Holy Ghost has crucified the crucified Lord. Did you ever think of that before? He has not only driven the nails through the hands and through the feet of Jesus Christ, and thrust the spear into His breast, but after those hands and feet were healed, he comes and says, I would like to drive those nails through again. And when a man reaches that point in his spiritual condemnation, he simply says, I do not want to hear God's Word any more, and never will. Therefore the man that thinks he has committed the sin against the Holy Ghost has not done it. The man that worries because he is afraid he has committed this sin, has not done it. The man that has committed the sin against the Holy Ghost never worries any more about it; he is as hard hearted as the fires of hell can harden his heart, and he simply will never hear God's Word again.

2. There Are Some Who Only Hear God's Word

There are some who never hear God's Word; then there are some that never do anything more than to hear God's Word. They hear it and that is all. They are Churchgoers. There are some people that would not miss divine

services for anything; you will find them in their pew every Sunday morning; to them it would be a terrible crime not to go to church, but if you ask them what they really heard two hours afterwards they would not know a thing; if you would ask them what they have learned in the last ten years, they would have to say nothing; if you would ask them what the text was, they would have to say, I don't know; if you were to ask them. What special benefit did you get out of the sermon today? they would have to reply. Nothing. They are hearers of the Word but not doers; not learners. They simply go to church; as I said a moment ago, they would not miss divine services for anything, but if on Monday they could make \$10.00 by telling a lie they wouldn't miss lying for anything; if they could rob some man during the week, they would not miss it for anything; if they could go and get drunk on Monday night they would not miss it for anything. How many hearers there are that never do anything more than just hear! They never try to learn anything, never try to commit a single promise. There isn't a chapter in the Bible that isn't full of the wonderful promises of God, and it is supposed we are to take hold of these promises one after the other, and grow in grace, and learn something; but Oh, how many there are who never pray! They hear, and do nothing more.

3. There Are Some Who Don't Do God's Word

Then there are some again who hear and do God's Word. Their daily prayer is, O God, I want more food for my soul! Their daily prayer is, God, prepare me that when Sunday comes I may be found in God's house; that I may be found in my Sunday School class, that I may appropriate one truth after the other, and that I may learn Thy holy will, and, having learned it, that I may go and do according to it. They pray that they may hear God's Word; they hear God's Word that they may learn it; they learn it that they may believe it; they believe that they may live, and they live that they may labor. That is the kind of Christians that James speaks of: "But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

Why should we hear God's Word if we do not want to learn it, and why should we learn it if we do not want to believe it, and why should we believe it if we do not want to live a better life, and if we want to live a better life, why should we not exercise the knowledge that we have? Pray tell me, what kind of a hearer are you this morning? Are you one who

possibly wishes you had not come? Are you one who, when you do hear God's Word let it go into one ear and out of the other, or one who intends to hear the Word of God for the purpose of profiting by it, that you may go and do something today yet, and tomorrow, and all the days of your life for the great and merciful God who laid down His life for you?

II. The Two Kinds of Religion

These are the three kinds of hearers. Let me call your attention a few moments to the two kinds of religion. There are *poor* religions, and there are *pure* religions.

1. Poor Religion

I call your attention to the poor kind. The poor kind is hypocritical.

“But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.”

If his religion is vain it is a poor religion. And why is it poor? It is poor because it is *hypocritical*; because it is *the ox kind*, and because it is *deceptive*.

It is hypocritical. The man who deceives himself, and tries to go on and let on as though he heard God's Word and never wants to do anything, is only trying to deceive the people, and, being a deceiver, is a hypocrite; and if a hypocrite, then you will find that he has got religion but very little Christianity. Mark well the difference between religion and Christianity. The average man seems to think that religion and Christianity are one and the same thing. The devil is just as religious as God is. Do not forget that. Do not forget that every heathen nation on earth is religious. Do not forget that the followers of Mohammed, who bow nine times towards Mecca are religious. Do not forget that mothers who will throw their babies into the

Ganges river are religious. Do not forget that the Indians, before they heard the Gospel, were religious; that the lowest tribes on earth are just as religious as any Christian people, but the man who has got the true religion has got something more than simply religion; he has got Christ and Him crucified, and lives for Jesus only, and therefore has Christianity. No wonder that John Arndt wrote that popular book, *True Christianity*; you ought to buy it if you have not got it; you ought to learn the difference between the shallow thing some people call religion, and the genuine Christianity, which means to hold fast to Jesus, the only Way, the Truth and the Life, who said that no man cometh to the Father but by Him. The man that I pity is the man who has been religious all his life, and at last will be damned and carry his religion to hell with him. If there is any man on earth whom we should love and try to emulate, it is the man who has found the truth and walks in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, and tells us to follow Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. It is a poor religion if it simply means religion and no Christianity.

It is also a poor religion if it means Bibles but not God's Word. The hypocritical religion has Bibles plenty. Do not imagine that every man who walks on the street with a Bible under his arm has got Christianity. You can hire men to carry Bibles by the dozen. It is one thing to have the Bible under the arm, and another thing to have it in the heart. It is one thing to have God's Word in the home, and another thing to have God's Word in the mind and in the heart. And do you know if your Bible is lying at home on the table from one end of the year to the other, and you never read it in family worship nor study that Word, that you are playing hypocrite? If I did not want to read the Word of God I would take that Bible out of the house. I would urge upon you all this morning to stir up conscience. I would urge upon you all not simply to sit here and say, I was at the First Lutheran Church this morning. Make up your minds that you are going home from the First Lutheran Church this morning with the intention of doing one of two things with that Book: either read it and study it, and get the mind of the Holy Spirit to show you what the Bible is; or, if not to do that, then say to your wife, I am not going to be a hypocrite another moment, having people thinking I am a Christian when I am not; having people say that I love the Book when I do not. Make a fire with your Bible, cook your dinner today with your Bible, or read it; do not be a hypocrite another hour. There

is a hypocritical religion that means Bibles plenty; Word of God not at all. God have mercy upon the poor souls who are empty of God's Word.

It is hypocritical to have prayers but no prayers. There are some people that go through the form of prayer without books as well as with books and never pray at all. There has been a good deal said against form, but I want it understood that no prayer was ever offered by man without form. Man cannot speak or sing without form; cannot read the Bible without form; cannot learn the alphabet without form. The fact is that the intelligence of the world has been handed down to us through form. Stop crying out against the wrong thing. It is not the form we want to cry out against. The thing we are opposed to is form, without anything in it. Some people pray from the book, and they put their prayers in that form, and bring their prayers to heaven; and some pray without books, and their prayers go to heaven in that form; and some people pray with the book and have no prayer; and some people pray without the book and have no prayer. There are more pray-ers in the world than prayers; and the man that prays and does not think of God, does not want to lead the better life, does not pray for humanity, is a pray-er but does not offer a prayer, and with all his words that sound like prayer, he is a hypocrite.

Let me call your attention to another kind of poor religion – that is the ox kind. I give it that name because I cannot find any other word to express it. James says: If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. When a man's tongue is not bridled he comes just as near being an ox as any one I know of. When you drive a horse you put a bridle into his mouth, but when you drive an ox you just throw the yoke on him, and when he gets stubborn he is the worst thing to run away; there is nothing to hold him by; and some people have just that kind of an ox religion because they never want to learn anything, they want to run wild, they want to be free, they want to do just as they please; they want to have a little yoke put on their necks, but nothing in their mouths; they want to go to church if there is no other place, but are just as willing to run wild as to be children of God. Whenever a religion becomes ox religion, that does not want to be guided by the Holy Spirit, it is deceptive. When a man does not know what he is, he has a very poor religion. And how many people there are today who absolutely do not know what they believe concerning anything. They have no faith in the Word of God itself as the inspired Bible; they have no faith with regard to the gift of

the Holy Spirit; they have no faith with regard to the bringing up of children; they have no faith with regard to baptism; they have no settled faith with regard to the Lord's Supper; they do not know whether Luther or Calvin was right; they do not know whether Jesus meant all He said or not; they are like a little ship upon the sea, when the waves drive it to and fro, they have no anchor, no rudder; they are all right as long as it is calm; but the first storm that comes up, you will find them no more. What a poor, poor religion! Oh, how deceptive! Like the branches upon the trees that have no sap, no life; they are willing to stay there until the storms come, and then they break off and fall to the ground. The man that has the Word of God in his heart as he ought to have, stands by the truth if the heavens fall. The man that has a poor religion will stay, providing he likes the preacher; he will stay providing nothing comes in his way at all, but, like the old dead branch, the first little wind that blows he goes down and that is the end of him. Pity the man with the poor religion!

2. Pure Religion

May God help us all to get the pure religion.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this. To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

Pure religion is very doctrinal. It cannot be otherwise.

"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

Who will be blessed? The man that knows the perfect law of liberty; the man that does not forget what he hears. How can a man know the perfect law of liberty? Surely not unless he studies the ten commandments and finds out his sins; then he will be driven to Jesus Christ, and finding Jesus Christ as the Redeemer that taketh away the sins of the world, he holds fast to Him and goes to Him in prayer, realizing that Jesus has set him free – free of his sins by the mercy of Christ he will now love the life of holy communion with the heavenly Father; loving this life he forgets not every day that he is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the

Holy Ghost, and as Jesus rose from the grave so he must arise in newness of life, remembering that because he is baptized he is an adopted child, he now shall be nourished in the Holy Supper; he believes this Word as Jesus has recorded it; and, hearing this Word, he holds fast to it, and knows himself and his God.

Not until you know the true and living God and Him only as your heavenly Father, and as the Son, and as the Holy Spirit, not until you know yourself through His holy law and through His Gospel have you got the perfect liberty of God, – then you are doctrinal; then you have pure religion.

And, having this pure religion, knowing yourself and knowing your God, and how you can be reconciled to Him through Jesus Christ, then your religion becomes practical. Dr. Luther at one time when dwelling largely upon the great doctrine of justification by faith, called this epistle of James the epistle of straw; but in after years when he entered the practical side of life more fully, he saw what Paul was on the one hand as to doctrine, James was on the other side as to practical life, and he saw after all that the Holy Spirit was the author of James as well as the author of Romans. Pure religion does not consist simply in sitting down and saying, I believe this and that. Pure religion means to put a bridle in the mouth, and close up the lips, and go out and do something for the people who need help. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. These dear members of ours who are taking care of these orphans are doing God's Word. That is pure religion. These dear friends who are going around and hunting up children whose fathers and mothers are no more living, are exercising pure religion. If your wife died, and you were lying on your death bed, and your little children were standing around the bed, you would begin to ask, what is pure religion? and if some good neighbor would come around and say. Just sleep in Christ, I will take care of your children, that would mean a good deal more to you in that hour than for him to say, I believe in God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Not that the one does not follow the other, but when a man does believe in God, it is his duty to put that faith into practice, and his object in life ought to be to keep his eyes open and hunt for something to do for his fellow men. It is one thing to sit at home and let some poor orphan come and rap at your door, and then you say, I have been your kind friend; and it is another thing to walk ten miles and rap at the door and say, If there are orphans here I

want to help them. The first is treating the orphan like a tramp, and the second is to become an angel messenger of God, to treat the orphan as God's dear child. There was a farmer of Saxony at one time known to be one of the greatest of Bible students among the laymen in that great country. He was called before the king one day and in order to test his knowledge of the Bible, some one said to the old farmer: How much cloth would it take to make a suit for God, for we are told by the prophet that He fills heaven and earth. Oh, said the old farmer, about ten yards would make Him a good suit. Why, how do you explain that? Why, he says, here is an orphan, and I think ten yards of cloth would make him a good suit of clothing with plenty of goods to spare, and God said. What ye have done unto one of these, you have done unto Me. It isn't hard to make a suit of clothes for God.

Pure religion means more than to simply sit around and say we believe in the Augsburg Confession, in Luther's catechism, and in the inspired Word of God. If you sit at home and say nothing but that, and do nothing, what is your religion worth? We ought to go out and look after those that need our help. How many boys are leaving home and coming to Mansfield, away from father, away from mother; how many girls are leaving their poor homes and coming to our city in order to fight the battles of life, and those boys and girls have immortal souls that are longing to talk about the things that pertain to their souls, and so in their despair, and homesickness, and hardly knowing what to do next, they begin to say a word about Christ to some so called Christian, and the so called Christian coughs and walks away and does not say a word, and those young people sink in despair and start out on paths that lead to destruction. It does seem there is so little practical, genuine religion among people, so little of the real, practical, visible Christianity. Many a young man today would be in heaven instead of hell if only some Christian would have said the right word at the right time to him.

Practical religion means to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. How often you have heard your present as well as your former pastors telling you of the importance of separating yourselves from the ungodly world; but what is the result? Not only is it a fact that some people have the spots of the world on them, but the real truth of it is that they have the garment of the world on them, with only a little spot of Christianity here and there. When you have your white garment on you positively know you

can not roll in the mud puddles and keep clean; you know you have to stay away from everything that is filthy and dirty. Pray tell me, how can you have a pure religion on Sunday and throughout the week not care one whit where you go or with whom you associate, what time you get home at night, rolling around in the filth of the world, and then wonder why you are not growing in grace? There are only two religions. It is the religion of the devil or the religion of Christ. It is the religion of the world, or the religion of heaven. It is pure and undefiled, or it is black as hell. Unspotted from the world? Do you remember that beautiful epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, where he says that the Church of God is without spot or wrinkle? How you mothers love to have a white tablecloth spread on your table, without a wrinkle in it, and without a spot, a picture of what your character ought to be. And so I say to you all today, live such a life that you are unspotted from the world. This Sunday the old church called *Rogate*, the Latin word for prayer. In the Gospel lesson you will remember Jesus said. Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, the Father will give it to you. Let us then conclude with prayer. Let us ask God to help us today that we may be the right kind of hearers, and the right kind of doers of God's eternal Word. This we ask in Jesus name. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we ask Thy rich and divine blessing to rest upon the message of the hour. We pray Thee, O Father in heaven, that Thou wilt help us this day to resolve to make the right use of Thy Word, to hear it whenever we can; to hear it that we may believe it; believe it that we may pray it; pray it that we may live it, and live it in such a way that we will be unspotted from the world. All these favors we ask in the name of the blessed Jesus, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

33. What Would You Do Today If You Knew That Tomorrow You Would Be In Eternity? *Sunday After Ascension.*

But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 1 Peter 4:7-11.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

WE HAVE JUST SAID, using Christ's own words, that the Word of God is true. Is it true? Did not Peter say nearly two thousand years ago. But the end of all things is at hand? Wasn't Peter mistaken? Did not Peter suppose that in a year or two the world would come to an end, and if so, was he not mistaken when he said, The end of all things is at hand? Dear friends, it is not in my power to say exactly what Peter thought, but it is in my calling to tell you that Peter made no mistake when as an inspired apostle he said at that time that the end of all things is at hand. You must remember that the Apostle Peter is not talking now as a man in relation to man, but he is talking as a man giving forth the voice of the eternal God. An hour is longer for an insect that lives a day than a year is for a man that lives to be thirty years of age, and when we remember that God is eternal, and stop and meditate on the great meaning of eternity, we will begin to see that not only two

thousand years, but ten times two thousand years, is but a moment in God's sight. The Psalmist has said that a thousand years are in Thy sight as a day. We can just as truthfully say that ten thousand years, O God, are in Thy sight as a day. Yesterday as I was trying to meditate on this great word Eternity, Providence so arranged it that the mail carrier threw a paper into my study, on the first page of which I found these beautiful words:

“Eternity! Eternity! Oh if
The soul could grasp the lengthening, lengthening,
Ever endless lengthening, lengthening of this,
The endless endless, never ending endless
Endlessness, as countless ages roll
In flaming waves, or glory's tide,
O'er lost or ransomed soul,
If crippled wren with broken wing could start
On earth throughout this endless, endless,
Never ending endless day
To hobble from Pacific's peaceful shore
To where Atlantic's waves and traffic roar.
Taking the sunset route, the world to cross to fill
Its mission wide of bearing in its bill
One single grain of sand from where it first begun
Its weary, fluttering, wingless course to run.
Returning slow on each world wide circle trip,
If when of sands the western ocean's shore it stripped
And cast them at Atlantic's bosom wide.
It then reversed and bore to western tide
The double portion o'er the same long run –
Eternity, Eternity has just begun.”

I do not believe I have ever seen in human language the beginning of eternity described more beautifully than in this little poem by Matthew S. Allen. If, therefore, my friends, this utter endlessness of which we have heard is but the beginning of eternity, you can understand how the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Peter could say two thousand years ago. The end of all things is at hand.

And now, my dear friends, after these few words of meditation, let me ask this question:

**What Would You Do Today If You Knew That Tomorrow You
Would Be In Eternity?**

In order to answer this question I may ask you twenty-five others today.

1. Would You Become Intoxicated?

In view of the fact that the end of all things is at hand, Peter said. Be ye therefore sober.

I am satisfied if you knew that before the sun went down tonight you would breathe your last breath, you would not think of becoming intoxicated this afternoon, and yet we have in this town over fifty-four institutions set up for no other purpose than simply to make drunkards, and hundreds and thousands of men are plunging in there like flies to the light, day after day, never stopping to think that the end of all things is at hand. If you knew that this night your soul should stand before God, would you spend this afternoon with your brain reeling with the deadly sleep of a drunkard?

If you knew that this would be your last day on earth and you had the privilege to vote whether the saloons shall stay or go, would you vote for the saloon to stay? I know there are some even professed Christians who expect to stay here a few years yet, and they are afraid on account of the loss of business, or on account of the loss of friendship, to vote as their consciences dictate, but if you knew, if you positively knew that this evening at six o'clock your work on earth is done, that you have a vote to cast this afternoon that is to decide the welfare of your children, and of your children's children for years and years to come, would you vote for the damnable institutions to stay? Would you do it?

If you knew that you would have to die this evening, would you prefer to drink a few glasses of whiskey and a few glasses of beer and become dead drunk and roll into eternity in a drunken stupor? When Jesus Christ on the cross refused to take the vinegar in order that he might die clear minded, would you want to take a stupefying draught of any kind the last morning of your life? I am satisfied there isn't a man sitting before me today that would go to the saloon this afternoon, or that would vote for the saloon to stay, or would want to die drunk, if he knew that this were the end of his life. And now I would like to ask this question: Has a man a right to do anything two days before he dies that he has not a right to do one day before he dies? If I have no right to die a drunkard in ten years from today, I have no right to be

one this afternoon, for I am sure if there is any difference it would be in favor of the last day. If I get intoxicated the last day I live it is only once, but if I begin this afternoon and get drunk every day that I live, and die in a year from now, it means three hundred and sixty-five drunks instead of one. And what I want to impress upon this intelligent audience this morning is this, that the longer the last day is away for you or for the world, the more important it is to begin right now to live right, for every day adds to your sum total a great amount of grace or a great amount of sin.

2. Would you want to live without prayer?

The Apostle Peter, in view of the fact that he saw the end was coming of all things, said “And watch unto prayer.” He did not say Watch and pray as we are told in some other sermons of prayer, but Watch unto prayer. In other words, he not only means for us to be watchful as you would be if you knew that the thief would break into your house tonight, but you must watch for the coming of the end, and watch for the opportunity of being where you can pray best. Watch unto prayer.

I should like to ask you, if you knew that tomorrow you would be in eternity, would you be sorrowful that you had prayerful parents? I am satisfied there are some people in the present day who are not as prayerful as their fathers and their mothers were. I do not know whether all communities are the same – in fact I know they are not, but I do know in the old community where I lived, though we had some people that had their weaknesses, I do not believe there was a family connected with the Christian Church that did not have family worship. I do not believe that any one of us here had a father or a grandfather, or a mother or a grandmother who came across the waters, whether from Europe in the north, or from the south, that did not come with a God’s library, a Bible and a prayer book, and some devotional books besides, and you will find when you leaf over those old books that their pages are not clean, but they are soiled by use. You will find, too, that those parents, though they may not have stood up and made any very loud public prayers, were people that had the conviction that they must be honest at any cost, that they must pay their debts, that they must give an account before God, that they must trust alone in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and that there was not a day passed when

they did not sit down to their tables and offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God at least three times. Were you ashamed of those parents? Are you sorry that you had a Godly father or a Godly mother?

I would like to ask you furthermore, if you knew that tomorrow you would be in eternity, would you mock the man that prays for you? Remember there are thousands of professed Christians all over this world praying every day for friends and foes, praying for you, no difference who you are, sitting before me this morning, there are thousands of prayers ascending to the throne of God day after day in your behalf. Would you mock those prayers today if you knew that tomorrow you would be in eternity?

And would you despise the little closet of prayer? The Apostle Peter admonishes us to watch unto prayer. What he had in mind is this, every true Christian knows the true meaning of that phrase. No difference how much we pray in public, no difference how many sermons we hear, how many songs of praise and how many public prayers, the real genuine Christian is not satisfied until he has gotten away from the multitude, away from the best friends he has on earth, away from his own wife and children, into some little place where he realizes that he is alone with God. Now if you knew that tomorrow you were to be in eternity, would you despise the little closet of prayer?

I am satisfied that if you knew that tomorrow you would be in eternity you would pray today as you never prayed before, but I want to assure you that if you positively knew that you were to die tonight it is less important that you pray today than it would be if you knew that you would live ten years yet. If I must die tonight, all that I need to pray for today is for God to watch over me twelve hours yet; but if I am to live twelve years more, there are hundreds and thousands of temptations coming that I know nothing about, and consequently I need more strength today than I do the last day of my life. Watch unto prayer. Seek your little closet, bow down in the presence of your God all alone, where you do not need to weigh words and think of critics, but where you can just pour out your soul to God, and remember, my friends, that if you are a Christian God will always give you something special to pray for. It may be that some of you have felt at times, that now if God would give me this thing I am asking for, then I will not need to trouble him any more. He gave you the very gift you asked for, and just then God gave you another problem to solve, and it came right after the

first one was solved, and it still became necessary for you to watch unto prayer, and thus He gives you something to solve all the time through life. And what a blessing it is that everything is not solved this morning! What a blessing it is that the time never comes in this life when we have nothing to pray over and to pray for!

3. Would You Try To Hurt And Harm Your Neighbor Today If You Knew That Tomorrow You Would Be In Eternity?

There are some people who seemingly just delight in doing some mean, devilish little trick that hurts somebody. Would you do that if tomorrow you knew you would be in eternity? Would you do it? Stop and ask yourself the question this morning. Oh! what a state of mind that would be, just to delight to say something or do something that might hurt some innocent party. The Apostle Peter calls attention to the fact that if the end of all things is at hand and eternity is near, we ought to become a little more charitable. “And above all things” – that is saying a good deal – above being sober, above praying, above all religion, above all things have fervent – warm, almost a hot charity among yourselves, for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Remember, my dear friends, that no man on earth can hide the sins of the world with his charity, only the righteousness of Jesus Christ can cover sins away from the eyes of God, but there is a kind of feeling in the human heart that likes to find sin even where it is not. God knows and man knows there is enough real sin in the world that we must not try to put sin where it is not, and yet there are people that just love to try to find sin where there is none. They have some kind of a Satanic suspicion in their minds that something is wrong somewhere; then they think it; the next thing they say it; next publish it, and it will spread from place to place and from mouth to mouth, and then they think they have done something noble, trying to lift themselves up by pushing, somebody else down.

If you knew that tomorrow you would be in eternity you would be a little bit careful, would, you not, of what you say about your neighbor, when you do not know the truth? Do you not remember what Dr. Luther taught you in the explanation of the eighth commandment? I guess the trouble is you have

forgotten it. No, the great trouble is you never knew it. That is the trouble. We have too many professed Christians, that were not correctly catechized; they never knew the true meaning of God's Holy Word. While Dr. Luther said of the eighth commandment that we should put the most charitable construction on everything, many professed Christians are going around putting the worst construction on everything. now in relation to our neighbor, let us have not only a love – for that is what charity means – but let us have a fervent love. A fervent love, is a love that is warm, a love like the love of a mother for her dearest child. Let us have such a love for our fellowmen, and wherever we can we will try and stretch the mantle of charity and never find sin where it is not, and, on the other hand, never call black white, either, but black black and white white, and where we do not know that white is black, let us call it white. That is charity.

4. Would You Exclude Company From Your Home Today If You Knew That Tomorrow You Would Be In Eternity?

The Apostle Peter says: “Use hospitality one to another without grudging.”

It does seem to me that true hospitality is not known today as it has been known in the past, nor known in this country as it is in some other countries. There are homes in Europe, and in this country, where the European spirit still prevails, where you cannot enter without being shown a spirit of hospitality concerning which the American people know nothing. There are some good old German homes where the coffee pot is never taken off the stove, in order that no man may step in without a warm drink being given him, homes where they know that to be hospitable it is not necessary to prepare a meal for a king or a queen, but just as simple and plain as possible. A bite of bread means so much. Just a sip of good warm tea on a cold day means so much, and now, if you positively knew that tomorrow you would be in eternity, I would like to ask the question if the poorly clad came to your door this afternoon, would you say. Go away? If you knew that tomorrow you would be in eternity, would you invite company in this afternoon when they come to the door, give them a chair, and when they go out say, I am glad they are gone? Would you do that? If you knew this, that

tomorrow you would be in eternity, would you close your blinds down and lock the door, and always live as if no one had a right in your home but yourself? Would it not be better, in view of the fact that eternity is coming for us all to cultivate a more loving spirit of hospitality?

5. Would You Oppose The Church Of God?

How many people there are in these days actually opposing the Church. Jesus Christ said: He that does not gather with Me scattereth. He that is not for Me is against Me. I will admit that a great many people are not positively fighting the Church, but they are negatively doing it. There are names on our own church book of people whom I have not seen here twelve times in two years. Where are they? They must be blind. If they were, then I would have a better feeling for them if they were so they could not come. But we have men whom I have never seen; I do not know whether they have been in church for ten years or not. Where are they? We have men who are in church but absolutely do nothing to build up the kingdom of God. We have men who would not miss a Divine service for anything, and they would not teach a Sunday school class for anything; we have men who would not sing a hymn for anything, and they would not miss doing nothing for anything. The Lord our God has given to every man some kind of a gift, and let that gift be what it will, he is as responsible for that gift he has as any other man for the gift that he has. You are as responsible this morning for the gift that God has given you, for the place that you occupy in this country, as a citizen, in the family and in the church as President [Theodore] Roosevelt is in the chair as president of this country. As we heard the other night, a penny is just as round as a quarter; a quarter is just as round as a dollar, and the penny has no more right to be square or to be three-cornered than the dollar has. There are penny people in the world; there are quarter people in the world and there are dollar people in the world, but every dollar is responsible for one hundred cents, and every quarter for twenty-five cents and every penny for a penny, and the Lord our God demands of every one of us that we give an account of our stewardship on the last great day. Now then, if you knew that eternity were open to you tomorrow, and that your life is ended, or the world would come to an end, what would be

your relation to the Church of God today? The Apostle Peter tells us what it ought to be:

“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

6. Would You Oppose The Means Of Grace?

If you knew that tomorrow you would be in eternity, would you refuse to hear God’s Word? Would you go on until tomorrow unbaptized? Would you refuse to go to the Lord’s Supper? Would you refuse to prepare to meet your God? My dear friends, the means of grace are the means that God has given us to become Christians, and for that reason as said in this text of ours. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. God pours out His grace to you through these means I have mentioned. When you hear God’s Word the Holy Spirit offers you His grace. When you are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, there you are born of water and the Spirit. When Jesus says to you. Take, eat, this is My body, and take drink, this is My blood which was shed for you for the remission of sins. This do as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of Me, what more can God do than to come and offer Himself to you? And now the question is, what would you do with these means of grace if you knew that tomorrow you would be in eternity?

7. Would You Ignore The Lord’s Day?

Would you rest all day and do nothing? Some people seem to think that Sunday is a day of rest, and consequently, although they can be up Saturday night until after midnight, and can get up every morning during the week at half past five, they imagine they are doing the Lord a wonderful service if they can sleep and snore on Sunday until noon. Would you do that if you knew that tomorrow you would be in eternity? Would you lie in bed during

the day, knowing that there are many souls all around you that are going to do just like you do? Would you leave these things undone? Would you sit down in your chair and absolutely do nothing? Remember, my friends, that the Apostle Peter tells us that just because the end of all things is at hand, it is our purpose to go and render God a service. If that is serving God, lying in bed and sleeping, or sitting at home doing nothing, too lazy to wash and dress, too lazy to go to God's house, then God can get service by putting you in your grave and putting a rock in the chair or a stone in the bed. Man is more than simply a block; he ought to have brain, and God has given him brain with which to work and with which to serve his Lord and Master.

8. Would You Seek Your Own Glory?

Would you seek your own glory if you knew that tomorrow would be the end of the world, if you knew that tomorrow you would be in eternity? What is the trouble with so many people in the present day that they are not in church, that they are not good Christians? The trouble is that the devil has made them believe that if they just try to keep the moral law they will go to heaven, and the result is that they are driving the rest to the lodge that has no Christ in it instead of the true religion; they are listening to the voice that says cut off this corner and round up this side, and quit this thing and quit that thing, and make yourself a better man, and live righteous before the world, and when you die it will be all right, and if there is anything in the world that makes the devil laugh it is to get a bad man to try to make himself better and to succeed in it. The devil himself has more respect for a decent child of the devil than for a real devilish child of the devil. If there is anything the devil loves it is to have one of his own handiwork almost an imitation of God's work. What is the trouble? Men are giving themselves the glory instead of giving it to Jesus, where it belongs. It was true in the days of the apostle and it is true today, and it will be true on the Judgment Day. If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Yes, my dear friends, there is the secret of true Christianity. We are poor, lost, condemned, helpless sinners. There is no strength in us. There is no

hope in us.

There is absolutely no merit in us. God is our all in all. Christ is our Savior. He even gives us the faith with which we believe in Him. He gives us the spirit of prayer. He gives us thankful hearts. He does all. There is only one thing that we can do, and that is to rebel against Him, and if we will continue to rebel and continue to resist Him, He will finally let us stand and will go and seek others as He did of old, and let us stand until we find ourselves lost, and lost forever. May God help us in this morning hour, my dear hearers and friends, to lead a new life, to lead it as we would lead it the day before we step into eternity, the day before the end of the world. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for Thy Word, which is the truth and therefore never makes a mistake. We pray Thee in this morning hour that Thou wilt bless this message to our eternal good. Our Father in heaven, do Thou help us to lead a sober and clean life; help us to watch for a closet of prayer where we can pour our hearts out to Thee. Help us that we may lead a life that is truly hospitable. Help us to lead a life that looks to the welfare and happiness of those around us. And we ask Thee that Thou wilt cover us with the mantle of Thy righteousness and give us of Thine own Spirit that we may try to treat our fellowmen as we would ask Thee to treat us. And we pray Thee, our Heavenly Father that Thou wilt help us to render Thee a service, that we may not sleep, nor sit down and do nothing, but arise in the name of the Lord our God, and with His might and power from on high go forth and labor while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work. O Lord our God, bless these dear fathers and mothers who are in our presence today with the hoary crowns upon their heads. Help that everything they have yet to say and to do may be so said and done that the younger generation walking in their footsteps, may walk in the footsteps of Him who will keep them, Jesus Christ. And we pray Thee, O God, that Thou wilt be with all young fathers and mothers in the training of their children, in establishing their homes upon the Rock of Ages. We pray Thee especially to be with the youth of this congregation and of our country. Lord, throw Thine arms of mercy around them and move some one to go to every one in the right hour and in the right moment, to say just the right

thing to save that one for heaven. We pray Thee to bless the dear little children who love to sing songs of praise to Thy name, who are starting in life and learning Thy good Word, and when they are old they will not depart from it. Bless the little infants, those that have just been brought to the altar in Holy Baptism in the past year. We pray Thee to bless the little children just born and not yet baptized, and may they soon have their names on the records of the church as members of Thee, the Christ, who is the Head of the great family of God. We pray Thee not only for the newly born children, we pray Thee in this day, heavenly Father, that children may be born in the future who shall be mighty men of God to do the great work that is to be done in the latter age of the world, when Satan with all of his host is fighting his last great battle. Give us men of God! Oh, hear the prayer of those who, like Hannah of old, and Elizabeth and Zacharias, are praying for Samuels and for John the Baptists. Lord our God, hear all our prayers, which we would sum up in that one beautiful prayer which Thou, Thyself, hast taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

34. What Meaneth This?

Pentecost.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, do we hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed and were in doubt, saying one to another. What meaneth this? Others mocking said. These men are full of new wine. Acts 2:1-13.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved Class and Hearers:

PENTECOST IS ONE OF THE OLDEST FESTIVALS in the Christian Church. It is older than the song of Bethlehem; it is older than any other festival in the year. Fifteen hundred years before Christ was born Pentecost was already well known among the Israelites. It corresponded in that day largely with our Thanksgiving Day now. It was a day of Thanksgiving to God for the rich harvest, and especially was it a day in commemoration of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. The word Pentecost means the fiftieth day – the fiftieth day from the time the children of Israel left the land of Egypt they received the Holy Law of God on Mount Sinai, and fifty days after Jesus Christ arose from the dead, we have the great Pentecost referred to in our text today. It is a notable fact in history, in the Bible as well as in profane history, that the

great messages have always been brief. What a short message that was the angels of heaven brought from on high when they sang of the new born King! What a short message that was that Nathan brought to King David that changed the history of the world. I should love to dwell for forty-five minutes on this beautiful theme, but the abundance of work today compels me to say what I have to say in about fifteen minutes, and for that reason I will ask you as a class to pray God the Holy Spirit right in this hour to give you a riveted attention to every word that I say, that you may not only remember what I say today, but remember it through life. When that great Pentecostal scene took place in Jerusalem the people were overwhelmed and cried out. What meaneth this? And that is the question that I want to put this morning:

What Meaneth This?

- I. What meaneth the Pentecost so great of old?
- II. What meaneth the Pentecost we now behold?

I. What meaneth the Pentecost so great of old?

What meaneth this Pentecost of old. It means:

1. That There Was An Unusual Harmony And Prayer Among Those People

“And when the day of Pentecost, was fully come they were all with one accord in one place.”

The word “accord” is a positive word. It means one heart. They were together in one heart, in one place, as we are told in a previous chapter, one hundred and, twenty people. Stop and think what that meant? One hundred and twenty people had the promise that the Holy Spirit was coming; were praying day and night for His coming; they had one mind; one thought; one language; one prayer; one object for living; one object for waiting; one object for worshiping, and that was to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to

fulfill the will of their God. Whenever a man makes up his mind that he wants to be in harmony with the Lord God Almighty, then he is on the right path, and whenever he is in rebellion against God's Holy will he is absolutely wrong. Your very presence here this morning shows very clearly that you have put the question, What meaneth this? and before we are told what this meaneth, this morning, let us go back and look over this beautiful text and try to put ourselves in the place of those people that said that day. What meaneth this? They found out there was a harmony among those people that resulted in that great Pentecost.

2. A Powerful Exhibition Of The Holy Spirit

Not only was there a great harmony there, but we also observe that on that day there was a powerful exhibition of the Holy Spirit. "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Is it any wonder that the people asked the question. What meaneth this? There those people were sitting and all at once there was a great sound as if it were a storm, and yet there was no storm, there was no wind blowing, but it sounded to them as though a great storm was coming that would sweep the city of Jerusalem away, and yet with all that there was no storm. All at once they see something like tongues of fire coming down on the people. It was not real fire, but it was the Holy Spirit Himself, and remember what John promised concerning the Holy Spirit. He said "There cometh One after me who shall baptize you with fire and with the Holy Ghost." You notice that this Holy Spirit was not in the form of a river in which they could go and be immersed, but this Holy Spirit came down like fiery tongues and sat upon them, and yet they were baptized with the Holy Ghost, teaching conclusively that baptism does not mean to plunge under, that that is not the Scriptural idea, but that it is a cleansing of the Holy Spirit coming down like fiery tongues, or, if you please, just as much in sprinkling when we use water as in immersion.

3. New Tongues Were Given

We notice furthermore not only fire there, not only a sound as of a rushing mighty wind, but there were new tongues given to these disciples. They spoke as they never spoke before. They proclaimed the wonderful Word of God to every man visiting that city, and there were people there from every island, from the surrounding country, Jews, devout men, not men who never heard the Gospel before; not men who never heard the Word of God before; not men, as many people suppose, that were heathen and were made Christian in a day; they had been Bible students; they were men who had listened to the truth for all these years, had waited for a Messiah, but were not sure that Jesus Christ was that Messiah, the Son of God, but now the Holy Spirit came down on them and convinced them that unbelief is the damning sin; that righteousness is not in man but lies in the arisen and ascended Lord; that there is a Judgment Day coming just as sure as Satan was chained on Calvary's hill, and when those people were convinced that now in truth the Holy Spirit has come as Jesus said He would, now the whole thing is plain to them; Jesus did come and die for them, ascended on high; He is the Son of God; this is the Holy Spirit; we have got the truth, and now we will live a new life and proclaim the risen Lord; and as the storms purify the atmosphere, and the lightning's flash gives us promise of a clear tomorrow, and as the fire cleanses and purifies, so the Holy Spirit hath now taken hold of us, and sweeping through us, burns out the dross and fits us for a life to come!

4. Growth On Account Of Good Use Of The Means Of Grace

What meaneth this Pentecost of old? Not only that the people were in harmony, not only that they were prayerful, not only that they had a wonderful gift there, the gift of tongues, but furthermore, there was a wonderful growth on that day, on account of the good use of the means of grace. I say it was a wonderful growth. That morning there were only one hundred and twenty in that upper room praying for the coming of the Holy Spirit. That day the apostle Peter preached to them, and before evening there were over three thousand souls baptized; and not only that but we are told afterwards that over five thousand turned to the living God, and they partook of the Supper, and they were baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and the promise was given to them and to their

children, and to all that were afar off. That first day of Pentecost they did not draw a line and say thus far and no farther. That promise was given to men that now there is salvation for Jew and Gentile, salvation for young and old, that there is a gift of the Holy Spirit to come to you through the baptism of water. Therefore, arise, said Peter, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and this promise is to you and to your children, and to them that are afar off, and as many as shall be called.

5. The Lord Added To The Church Daily Such As Should Be Saved

And finally, the last verse of this chapter says that the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved. It seems to me that that first Pentecost settles the question as to whether a man can be a Christian and be outside of the Church or not. The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved. How can a man be a child of God and be outside of the Church? How can a man be a child of God and stay away from the means of grace? How can a man be a child of God and not be baptized when God says he shall, and not partake of the Holy Supper when Christ says. This do in remembrance of Me? How can a man be a rebel and be a child of God? It is a glorious thing, therefore, to ask the question this morning. What meaneth this, as it was asked on the great day of Pentecost of old?

ii. What Meaneth The Pentecost We Now Behold?

But, my dear friends, sometimes we feel like those aged men that repaired the temple. You remember when they came back from captivity the glorious old temple had been torn down and burned and then they started to build a new temple, and the old fathers wept and cried because they saw the difference between the old temple in all its glory, and the new one which seemed to them so inferior. The young people who were born in captivity, never having seen the old temple, laughed and rejoiced, but the old people who had seen the glory of the old temple and now beholding the inferior

new one, cried like little babes, and sometimes we feel about the same when we compare the present Pentecost with the Pentecost of old. When we stop to think how on that morning the sound came like a rushing mighty wind, and the fiery tongues came down upon the disciples, and how Peter preached with such masterly power, and how thousands of people asked the question. What shall we do to be saved? and they all came and partook of the blood and body of Christ, and all tried to be a help to each other, and sold all their goods and were kind to the poor, and grew in number and usefulness to their fellowmen: when then we compare the Church of today with its selfishness, when we stop to think that many a poor church today is not receiving a single member on this day of Pentecost, it almost makes us weep, and yet we have a right in this church this morning to ask the question. What meaneth this?

What meaneth this, that fifty men and women and children shall today unite with this Christian Church? It means today, my friends, exactly what it meant nearly two thousand years ago. Why were there so many people added to the Church of old on that first great Pentecost? Because there was harmony there. And let me say right here that no church on earth ever can prosper until you have harmony in that church. Wherever you can get the people to fighting among each other in the church of God, there God's work is done and the devil has his own way. And mark you, the very fact that there are fifty people sitting before me today who unite with this church, is an evidence that the church at large is at harmony; it is an evidence that the church at large is prayerful. I do not mean to say there is perfect harmony here on earth. There never was a church on earth where there were not some few people who did as they did on that first day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was visibly before their eyes, when they heard Him as the mighty storm of heaven, when they saw with their own eyes and heard with their own ears that these men were preaching the Almighty Gospel of Christ in all the known languages, yet there were some few people who went around and said, these men are full of new wine, and mocked them; and so you will find a mocker standing around here and there on this day of Pentecost just as well as the Pentecost of old. It may be, dear hearers, that you have done some of that mocking yourselves, in the past, but dear friends, whether you have or not, what meaneth this? It means that after all the great body of these Christians are one at heart. It does mean that our united prayer is that God in His love will lead us all on that narrow way that

leads to heaven. It means that we are one in praying for the coming of the Holy Spirit, and I question, my friends, whether you can find a church on God's earth today that is more in harmony than we are. Where is there one where there are so many that have one design and one prayer and one aim for the spreading of God's kingdom any more than we have here? And that is what this means. Just as soon as the Church of God is quarreling with itself and debating with itself, and the members are fighting among themselves, just so soon the addition of souls ceases. God the Holy Spirit is in our midst. That is what it means.

It does not simply mean that we are one in harmony and in prayer, but it means furthermore, that you are getting the good old Gospel. My dear friends, I have often wished that I could preach as Whitefield did, or as Luther did. If there is anything in the world that I have prayed for and aimed for, it is to be a mighty man of God in the pulpit, not for any glory to myself, but alone to the glory of God. I recognize, however, that I am a very weak man in the pulpit. I recognize more and more that without Jesus I can do nothing. I recognize that if it were not for His gift and for His presence this morning, my work would utterly fail, but there is one thing that I will yield to no man, though he can preach a thousand times more eloquently, he cannot preach a better Gospel than I am preaching. No man on earth can preach a better Gospel than I am preaching. It is not I, but it is God's Word that you are getting, and I challenge any man on God's earth today to point to a single declaration I have ever made in this or any other pulpit that cannot be substantiated word for word by the Word of the Holy Spirit, and consequently, I shall never accept the statement that we have a right to our own opinions. I have no right to my opinion in this pulpit. It is not human opinions you want to hear. If I were preaching opinions you would all go out of this church and live just as you did before, but every man sitting before me this morning must acknowledge that when he has heard God's Word from this pulpit he has gone out with the conviction in his own conscience that what that man taught us today is the Bible, and that is what this means this morning. No human tongue can win souls. No human power can bring men to God, but there is a power in God's Word that nothing but devilish stubbornness can resist. The apostle Paul, when he described a certain class of people that would not come to Christ, said. Ye are a stiff-necked people, comparing them with the ox that bears the yoke and pulls against everything that is right.

The apostle Paul said, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to them who believe, and so I stand here this morning and say that I am not ashamed of the Word of God; I am not ashamed of the pure Gospel as confessed in the Lutheran Church, and the confession of the Lutheran Church will never be changed until the Holy Spirit changes this Bible.

Sometimes people think it is asking a good deal for a man to confess on his confirmation day that he is going to be faithful to the church until he dies. It would be an awful thing to confess to be faithful to a church until you die, that doesn't preach the truth, but what else can you do when you have the truth exactly as the Holy Spirit gave it? You have either to be faithful to that or not be a Christian at all, so it is nothing out of place when you will be asked the question, Will you be faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ as confessed in the Evangelical Lutheran Church until death? Your answer Yes, means, I confess I will accept God's eternal Word just as He gave it, until I die, and that is the only confession worth making and the only vow worth taking.

What meaneth this? It means that the Church of God grows today as it grew of old. While it is true that there are only fifty souls added to this congregation today, it is true that there are this morning thirty-five thousand Lutheran preachers all over this world preaching Christ and Him crucified to a dying world, and I am safe in saying that a large percentage of these ministers of the Gospel are meeting the newly confirmed members and not three thousand, but possibly thirty times three thousand souls are being added to the Church of God in this very hour.

What meaneth this? It means that the Church of God will grow where the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and not the opinions of men, and where this truth is preached to hearts of the people that have one accord and one prayer for the extension of God's kingdom, and where those few stand around and mock and say these men are full of new wine, all are overwhelmed with the mighty truth and souls are coming to God.

One man was unkind enough not long ago to say, It is true the First Lutheran Church is growing, but what kind of people are they getting, and a man who stood by his side said, I will tell you. Here is a man that was a drunken old sot, and today he is one of the best men in the city. That is the kind of people they are getting. That is not the only kind, they are getting some of the best citizens of Mansfield, but I want you to understand the real

truth, the Gospel was intended to help people, and all of them, and any man that will say the Church of God should refuse to take any other person on earth, does not understand the work of the Holy Spirit nor the Word of God in general. I am proud of every member that has come into this church and I pray God this day that you will all be so directed that you will stand as monuments of the wonderful grace, of God.

What does this mean? It means that if we do more for the poor and practically carry out the old Pentecostal spirit in the present day that this church must grow and grow and grow until we have more people than we can contain within these walls. It means that the people will come together there where they feel that the great Church of God is in its fulness, and if you want to know why people are attracted to this congregation today, it isn't due to any one man, but it is due to the teaching of a chain of men who from the very organization of the First Lutheran Church, have given their hearts wholly to the Master, men who have learned how to say, we want to be helpful to others and to all; who have said, we want a church not for the rich, a church not for a select class of people, but we want a church for immortal souls, and when there is hunger we want to feed; when there is thirst we want to give a drink; when there is nakedness we want to clothe; when in prison we want to visit them, and do for them as we would do for the Lord Jesus Christ. And where that spirit prevails there you will find the Holy Spirit, and where the Holy Spirit is there you will find souls growing in grace, and added to the church such as should be saved.

And in conclusion, dear class, to what I have said to you, let me add just these three thoughts:

1. *Buy good books.* You know, my dear friends, how little you have been required to learn to come into this class. A good deal less than I have ever demanded of any other class in my life, and yet I did feel that if I could just give you a good start on the narrow road we would have school afterwards, and consequently I urge upon each of you today to vow before God that you are going to have a little library you are going to study in the future, and in that little library do not forget first of all that little catechism. The more you study that little book, the more you hear that book, the more you will find out what a wonderful gem it is; and therefore, I urge upon you all, whenever you have the opportunity in the future to join the larger catechetical class, come and

- hear more and more. There is one in this house that has gone through that catechism seven times since I am in your midst, and no one knows better than that one what a wonderful blessing that has been. And now I will ask you to go just as often as you can to catechetical instruction and learn more and more of the true doctrine of God's Word.
2. I would ask you to get a *Bible history*. You can buy a Bible history that will be a wonderful help to you in your understanding of the Bible. Buy that and read it.
 3. I would have you get a *good Bible with good large print*, call it your own, read it now and make up your mind that you will read that Book until you die, so that when you are old and your eyes begin to fail that you can at a glance at a page know what is on that page because you have read it before, so the time will never come that you cannot read the good old Bible.
 4. Then I would ask you to get a *hymn book* so that when you come to church you can open to the hymn and help praise God, and when you have your catechism and Bible history, and your Bible and hymn book, then subscribe for a good church paper, and keep in mind day by day what God is doing today.
 5. I come to some men and say. Why don't you take a *church paper*? Oh, they say, I have a Bible. You might just as well quit taking the daily paper and go look at your United States history every evening. The Lord God isn't giving us the daily papers, but He is giving us the church papers that we may know what God is doing in the church every day. So I would say a good Christian should have the church paper and should study all these things.

2. Learn All You Can of God's Holy Word

In the second place, I would have you learn all you can of God's Holy Word. Learn it in the catechetical class. Learn it in the Sunday School. Do not think like some people that you are too old to go to Sunday School. No man on earth is too old to study God's Word half an hour before Divine service, and it will be a blessing if you will go next Sunday morning into some Bible class; go and sit down and study God's Word and make your Sunday School lesson just as regular as you do your meal. Some people eat

only one meal a day; they are going to lose health. Eat three meals a day and study God's Word every day. You need it.

Not only go to Sunday School but to divine service. Unless you are sick and on your bed be found in God's house every Sunday. Do not say you cannot. The Lord God never gave us a single law that was impossible. He says, Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Dear friends, the same God who said, Honor thy father and mother, wants you to honor father and mother, wants you to keep the Sabbath Day holy, because He said so. Therefore, I urge upon you, let not this day pass by whenever it comes without being in God's house and hear the Word of God. No one is so poor that he will not get something to take home with him to be food for his soul.

And then study God's Word at home. Open the Bible every day, learn something, if only a verse or two, meditate on them, and pray over them. You will grow. We do not get to be Christians in an hour. These beautiful flowers did not come out in a night. The bulb was planted, it grew, and at last came out this beautiful flower we see this morning. Our growth will be longer and slower than that of the flower. Here is a little egg, a little chicken comes out, in an hour it runs, and we often think, Oh, that the little babe could do that. But babes get older than chickens do and consequently it takes longer to raise babes than chickens, and it takes longer to raise men who get to be seventy-five years old than it does to raise a flower that only lives today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire. Consequently, we must learn that this growth is gradual, and you ought to study God's Word every day at home and thus grow in grace.

May God help you to grow day by day, learn more and more of God's eternal truth and then when your last hour comes and you breathe your last, you will not only rejoice that you have done your part in this world, but all your friends will rejoice. Oh, I believe, my dear friends, that there is great joy in heaven this morning! How some of your fathers and mothers would rejoice if they could sit here and see you! And may be they do see you. I believe they do. And what joy there would be in their hearts to know you are here in God's house doing your part to serve your fellowmen. May the Holy Spirit direct you this day and through life, and may the prayers of this whole church go up to the heavenly throne in behalf of those who come to this altar today. Amen.

(Communion).

35. The Divine Deep. *Trinity Sunday.*

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counselor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him and through Him and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen. Rom. 11:33-36.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THE SEA AND THE SEAS OF THE WORLD are a great study. If you were this morning standing on some lonely island in the midst of the ocean, you could hardly imagine that you are standing on the summit of a great mountain. If the waters of the sea were suddenly to leave you, you would find that that island is nothing but the top of a great mountain that goes down to the fathomless deep. I call it fathomless, not because it has no bottom, but there are places in the sea over five miles deep, and no one knows exactly how deep the deepest place of the sea is. The sea itself is a wonderful part of the world, covering about three-fourths of the surface of the earth, filled with salt water, which itself has never been solved by the great intelligence of the world. Not a man on earth can tell us why the sea is filled with salt water and always just the same amount of salt. There are many theories, and one is that there is a mountain of salt somewhere, but if there be a mountain of salt in the sea, why should not the sea get more salty? Why should it always be the same? And then again we see the great wisdom of God. We see the great deep Divine as well as the deep of the waters. If it were not for the salt water of the great oceans the world could not live; everything would go to corruption. Not only is this true, but the sea

would not be the highway it is to bear the heavy burdens, for only salt water could bear the burdens that cross the Atlantic and the Pacific. God, in his wisdom, has buried many treasures in the great sea as it surrounds this earth. I wish this morning, however, to call your attention to this great truth, that the ocean with all its wonders is only a drop in the great sea Divine. Your attention then is called this morning to

The Divine Deep

- I. It is just as deep as God.
- II. It is fathomless for man.

I. It Is Just As Deep As God

The Apostle Paul stood before this great Deep when he cried out: O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counselor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto Him again? For of Him and through Him and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen. As the Apostle Paul stood before the great deep of God, he realized that this Deep is just as deep as God Himself; just as deep as the *Trinity*; just as deep as *His riches*; just as deep as *His wisdom*; just as deep as *His knowledge*.

1. The Trinity Himself Is A Great Deep

This epistle has been selected by the Church of God as one very appropriate to give us the great doctrine of the Trinity. You remember that in the first season of the Church year we dealt with the love of God that gave His Son to the world; and then we began to treat of Jesus Christ who gave His own life to save the world; and then the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son, and calls, and gathers, enlightens, sanctifies and keeps us. Now we are approaching the last half of the Church year. The festivals are now in the past. Now we are going to treat, not of one person of God, but of three, namely, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. And Paul, looking

into this great doctrine of the Trinity, cried out, O, the depth of this Trinity, for of Him and through Him and to Him are all things. Of the Father, through Jesus, and to the Holy Spirit, are all things. One God and three persons. Is there any greater deep in all the world than the essence of God? Ask yourself the question. Who is God? and the Bible gives the answer. The Lord He is God and beside Him there is none else. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. The very first commandment settles it that there is but one God. I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other gods before Me. And yet in this same Word we find that the Father is God; that the Son is God; and that the Holy Spirit is God; and to one who does not understand the revelation of God's Word as given to us, it might seem as if there were three Gods and yet only one, which would be a contradiction. No, there is nothing in the Bible contrary to reason, but there are thousands of things in the Word of God away above reason, and this is one of them, the essence of God, one God in three persons. There is no philosopher in the world who can solve the Trinity. No difference whether the man be Gladstone, or Emperor William, or any great theologian, wherever he stands, he must simply bow his head and say, I bow before Thee, the great God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. I do not understand Thee. I cannot comprehend Thee. Thou art too great for me. Oh, the depth of the Divine deep! Let us be thankful this morning to God that the Trinity itself is not a doctrine which has been brought forth by man. No man on earth ever could have thought out the Trinity. It is a revelation from heaven. It is the essence of the Triune God.

2. This Divine Deep Is Just As Deep As His Riches

O the depth of the riches of God! And what is this riches? We find this beautifully expressed in the last verse. For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. And these "all things," and the things that God the Father hath given us in creation, and God the Son hath given us in redemption, and God the Holy Spirit hath given us in sanctification, and whether we look at creation, or redemption, or sanctification, we are compelled to cry out. Oh, the Divine deep, and the wealth of our God! It makes no difference where you look in creation, you see the riches of God. A man would be as dumb as a brute if he could look at that little bouquet of flowers and not say, Oh, the riches of God that could put all those varied

colors in that beautiful little petal. None but the wealth of God could give us such flowers. These are only a few we find in the same garden. One step further and the same soil gives us this beautiful rose, and it is but another step further and there we see that the same soil has produced a rose of another color, and thus on through the garden, and through the yard, and through all creation, from the tops of the mountains down to the depths of the sea, everywhere we behold the great wealth of the creation of our God. Oh, the depth of the Divine deep!

Not only is it true that there is wealth in creation, but there is also a great wealth in redemption. Not only of Him, but through Him, are all things. Let us not forget that Jesus Christ is the Word that became flesh, and let us not forget that Jesus says that without Him was not anything made that was made. Let us not forget that Jesus Christ who was nailed on the cross of Calvary made the worlds, and is the Word that the Father spoke which afterwards became flesh. And so we look at Jesus Christ's redemption on the cross, and we are compelled to say. Oh, the depth of that redemption! Oh, the wealth of that redemption! Just stop a moment and think of your own value and you will begin to realize what the value of Christ's redemption was. Jesus says of you yourself, that you are worth more than all the world. If creation is rich in the mineral world, my dear friends, you yourselves are richer in the animal world, and God has made you so precious that He declares that all the world to be gained would be a loss if you had to give your soul in exchange for it. That God who has made you more precious than all the world found you lost and found me lost, and all the millions and billions of people that have dwelt on the earth were lost, and He paid the price, gave the ransom for this lost world through His Son Jesus Christ on Calvary's hill. Therefore when you look at the cross remember that there hangs the great wealth of redemption. No wonder Luther wrote in his explanation of the Apostles' Creed, that we are redeemed not with gold nor silver, but with His holy precious blood, and with His innocent sufferings and death; in order that we might be His, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness; even as He is risen from the dead, and lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true. What is most certainly true? That redemption is the great Divine deep of His wealth.

And this is just as true of His sanctification. For of Him and through Him, and to Him, are all things. Let us not forget that the Holy Spirit has

given us the new birth, and let us not forget that it is He who speaks to us through the Holy Word of God. Let us not forget that it is He who calls us, and gathers us, and enlightens us, sanctifies and keeps us; and let us not forget that the devil, and the world and the flesh can never grasp us from the hands of the Holy Spirit if we will but listen to His voice and follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Oh, the wealth of the sanctification of the Holy Spirit!

3. It Is Just As Deep As His Wisdom

Not only is it true that this Divine deep is as deep as the Trinity, and as deep as His riches, but it is just as deep as His wisdom. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counselor? Here we see the great wisdom of God's deep. Who hath known the mind of God? How often do we hear men say. Do you comprehend this Word of God? And how often we hear Christians say, I cannot believe this doctrine or that doctrine because I cannot comprehend it. Oh, what nonsense! I told you the story a year ago today of St. Augustine in his dream going past the ocean and seeing what he thought at first was a little boy dipping the ocean dry with a sea shell, and when he rebuked that boy for his foolishness, the little boy said, I can dip this ocean dry just as quickly as you can fathom the Trinity. – for that is what the great Church father was trying to do. He was trying to comprehend the doctrine of the Trinity, a thing that was useless. Then said the boy. With this sea shell I will dip the ocean dry before you fathom the Trinity. And he looked at the boy a second time and it was an angel from heaven, teaching St. Augustine the wonderful truth that God cannot be comprehended. And if you would all stop and think a moment on that line you would not have your foolish notions about the Lord's Supper. You would not stand before the altar of God and say this is only bread and wine, when God says This is My body and this is My blood; you would say. Lord, Thou hast spoken the truth; I cannot comprehend it; I believe it. Dear friends, it is a great deep, and the great depth lies in this, that no man knows the mind of God. No man can take the ocean and put it into a sea shell; no man can take a barrel of meat and put into a thimble; and no man can take the great mind of God and crowd it into a few ounces of brain. We must believe the message of

God because it is a great deep. What a foolish man that would be that would say, I do not believe there is an ocean because I have never been down at the bottom. The man that has been in the navy all his life is satisfied to stay on top of the water; he doesn't try to go to the bottom; and so it is enough for you and for me, on this great Divine deep, simply to know that what we do not know God does.

4. Who Has Been God's Counselor?

Who told God how to make the stars? Who told Him where to place the sun? Who told God how to shovel out the oceans and lakes and streams and put up the mountains? Who told God to make the earth just as it is, with all its flowers? Where were you when God laid the foundations of the world? Do you remember the question that God put to Job? That is the question I put to you this morning. Oh, my friends, long before there was a man on earth God had made all His plans. He doesn't need your counsel nor mine. We stand before the Divine deep, and who has ever been able to trace His judgments? We are told in the 36th Psalm, "His judgments are a great deep." In the text of today we read, "How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!" The hound can follow the deer, but it is a foolish dog that tries to follow the ship across the trackless ocean. The dog may follow the rabbit to his hole, but it is a foolish dog that tries to follow the eagle in his flight over the clouds. And thus, dear friends, we may see and trace the hand of God in the things around us, but let me assure you that the time will never come when any man can trace the judgments of God. Years ago I tried my best to find the best book in the world on the philosophy of history. I bought one book after the other on the philosophy of history, and I read history after history, and philosophy after philosophy, and every time when I was done I had to throw the book down and say, Oh, you foolish man, you haven't solved the problem at all, and it never occurred to me even in the eighteen years of my ministry that God told us long ago that no man on earth can ever write the philosophy of history. How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! The man that stands up before an audience and tells just what is going to happen in the future, you can make up your mind is a fool. That is in the hands of God to tell us all about the future. No man can say exactly what it will be. A few years ago as I was riding through Mansfield when I knew none of you, a

man who seemed to be very wise explained to me fully why it was we had so few rains. He said, “The day will come before long when this whole country will be a desert because we are cutting down the trees and consequently there will be no heavy rains in the future.” This whole past week has said that man was a fool. It has been raining as it has not rained for many years. Who can tell when it is going to rain? Who knows today what kind of weather there will be tomorrow? Who reads the newspapers and the reports of the weather prophet and makes up his mind that it is going to be just as the man says? No, my dear friends, history lies in the hand of God, and while we may have general outlines of how things happen and how they may be in the future, and while the light of Revelation brings us the true will of God concerning some things, we do not know how God is going to bring the next answer to our prayers. We may pray for one thing and He will bring the answer in a far different way than we ever expected. Oh, we must all acknowledge that God’s judgments are a great deep!

II. It Is Fathomless For Man

While we have studied this great truth this morning that the Divine deep is just as deep as God, do not forget that it is fathomless for man.

1. It Therefore Demands Faith

It is fathomless for man, and consequently it demands faith. The Apostle Paul has been treating in the first three chapters here, previous to the text, of the great fall of Israel, of the Gospel being sent to the heathen, and how in the end the Gospel will come back in its mercy and save Israel again, and in studying this wonderful doctrine of our God, he found himself launching out to so great a depth that he simply stopped and cried out, O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and his ways past finding out! In other words, the Apostle Paul showed the Romans there was only one way to be saved, and that is through faith in Jesus Christ, whether a man be Jew or Gentile, it is the only thing for us to do. And now, since we have heard this morning how the Divine deep is too deep to be comprehended, let us now take hold of all of God’s promises by faith, and remember it is the way to live. Yes, faith is

what we must all pray for. As you have heard this morning, you never can comprehend the mighty deep of God, consequently God in His wisdom has said, I will not ask you to comprehend Me. I will not ask you to fathom this deep. All I ask of you is to know that there is a deep here. That should satisfy you. And the thing for you to do is to trust that deep and have faith in Me and I will do the rest. Yes, what we need is faith. This beautiful little poem fell into my hands this morning, which expressed exactly what I want to say:

"Serene I fold my hands and wait
Nor care for wind, or tide, or sea;
I rave no more 'gainst time or fate,
For lo! my own shall come to me.

I stay my haste, I make delays
For what avails this eager pace?
I stand amid the eternal ways,
And what is mine shall know my face.

Asleep, awake, by night or day,
The friends I seek are seeking me;
No wind can drive my bark astray,
Nor change the tide of destiny.

What matter if I stand alone?
I wait with joy the coming years;
My heart shall reap where it has sown
And garner up its fruit of tears.

The waters know their own, and draw
The brook that springs in yonder height;
So flows the good with equal law
Unto the soul of pure delight.

The stars come nightly to the sky;
The tidal wave unto the sea;
Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high,
Can keep my own away from me."

Let the sea and the waves roar, let all things go as they please, there is a Hand that governs the destiny of nations; there is a God in whom we can

trust; there is One who leads the way, and in Him we are safe. Believe in God, my dear friends. The Divine deep is unfathomable.

2. The Sea Conceals Great Wealth

And then I would call your attention to this great truth, that the sea conceals great wealth. We sometimes think that all of the world lies on the earth. If we could go down to the bottom of the sea today we would find animals there much larger and much older than on earth. The elephant and the largest animals on earth sink into insignificance compared with the great whales and the great monsters of the sea. Here the animals live only a short time, but there are animals in the great ocean that are older than yonder oaks on the hill. Oh, if we could just know the wealth that lies down in the bottom of the great sea! And during the past week not only ten thousand soldiers of Japan went down to the bottom, but all those rich vessels lie down at the bottom of the sea; and who can count all the vessels that have gone down, and all the bulk of gold and silver and jewels that have been buried in the bottom of the sea by the storms and the waves that have roared in all the past? Oh, we must acknowledge that the great deep is full of wealth and full of riches. And so it is with the great deep Divine. Oh, the riches of God's creation! Oh, the riches of God's redemption! Oh, the riches of God's sanctification! Oh, the riches of the book of revelation! Wherever we look we behold the great deep of our God full of wealth. Every verse of the Bible is full of gold. Pray over it and shake it until the fruit falls into your hands. I called your attention a moment ago to the fact that if the oceans were not filled with salt water, the water itself would perish and become corrupt, and the whole earth would lose the life now in it. And so as there is life in the great deep, there is life in the deep Divine. Let us stop trying to trace our own way. Let us go to Him who said, I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no man cometh to the Father but by Me. In the hot months you will find the wealthy people, and those who are not rich, leaving home and going to the sea in order that there they may enjoy the breeze of the saline waters, in order that there they may regain their health, and get the nervous force sufficient for the battles of the coming year. Why? Because the great deep is the healer of the nations. And so we must go to the great deep of God's Word that our souls may be healed and that we may be well in soul as well as in body.

4. The Sea Is Safe

And last of all, just because this sea is so unfathomable, it is safe. There was a time when the people of this world imagined that they never could cross the sea because of the depth of the water. The old sailors stayed along the shore and they played along the shallow waters, and every time the storms came their ships would dash against the shores and against the rocks, and more men lost their lives close to the shore than ever lost them in the middle of the deep. The old men in the navy know far better. The men who sail out week after week and year after year always feel perfectly safe when they are out in the middle of the deep. And so it is with regard to our religion. There are some people who are always groveling around in the shallow waters, people who have come into the church without proper catechization, people who know too little of God's Holy Word, people who know nothing about the doctrines, people who are honest and sincere, but the great trouble with them is that they have no promise in their minds, no Word of God in their hearts; they are always sailing around in the shallow waters and the first little storm that comes up makes a shipwreck of their faith; they go to destruction. The man that is safe is the one that will launch out into the deep. When the Savior told the apostle to go out and fish, he did not tell him to stay along the shore. Launch out into the deep, He said, and then they drew up so many fish that the boat began to sink. And so I cry out to this congregation, stop dwelling in shallow waters! Do not remain ignorant of God's Holy Word. Go to the Sunday School class and study the lesson week after week and day after day. Come to the Divine service and hear God's Holy Word, that you may be more and more fitted for the path of life, and be able to plunge out into the great ocean of God's mighty deep, and you will find yourself safe – safe in time and safe in eternity – safe forever! As I stated a moment ago, there was a time when sailors were afraid to cross the mighty deep. They thought that all the dangers of the world would be averted if only there were not so much water. The question four centuries ago was, how can we get rid of this great trouble, the seas? In the present day how the people work for passages across the hills and through the mountains! How they work to lay tracks for street cars and all manner of conveyances for traffic, never remembering the great truth when God laid the highway of the deep, He made the best way of passage there ever was in the world. Today we recognize the fact that the sea is the

blessing of the world; that the ocean is the way to reach the nations; that that is the best way to equip ourselves for travel. Get your vessels and God will lay the track; get your vessels and God will give you the bridges; get your bridges for the ships and you can go from nation to nation and visit all the world in boats. It is God's highway. Thus, my dear friends, it is with the Divine deep. Do not be afraid of the great ocean of God's Revelation and of the great ocean of God's mighty Providence. His ways are past finding out, but they are perfectly safe, and they are the highway that leads to God. And consequently I urge upon you all this morning to go to the Father in prayer, on the highway of the great deep Divine. Amen.

Prayer

O heavenly Father, we thank Thee in this morning hour that Thy mind is too great for us to comprehend; that Thou hast arranged all things without asking us for counsel, and that even in this day of enlightenment we are not yet able to write the philosophy of history, O Father in heaven, there is a philosophy of history which Thou hast given to which we can hold, and that is that all things work together for good to them that love God. If we cannot understand why Thou shouldst come and take a mother away from her little children, or why Thou shouldst come and take away from a family their only son, or why Thou shouldst come into the world and take away from a congregation their beloved pastor, or why Thou shouldst come into a home and take away the head of the family, O God help us to remember if we do not understand it that Thou dost. Let us remember this morning that we are in a great deep, and that this great deep is Divine, and because it is Divine it is safe, and because it is safe it is the highway that leads to heaven. O Lord help us all this morning to launch out into the deep with the song and prayer, which Thou hast taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

36. Who Is A Liar? *First Sunday After Trinity.*

God is love: and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us. If a man say: I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him. That he who loveth God love his brother also. 1 John 4:16-21

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

WE ARE NOT SURPRISED to find from the apostle John a beautiful message of love. He is the one apostle who died a natural death, and who reached the age of about one century. It is said of him that when he was so old he could not walk to the house of God any more, he had men to carry him into the church, and every time before he left that church he would arise just long enough to say, "Little children, love one another." What a beautiful scene! How many people there are this morning who could come to the house of God themselves and they will not, with the strength that God gave them, but John, the apostle of love, allows himself to be carried, and urges others to carry him where he might hear the sweet Word of the living God.

It seems somewhat strange to us when we realize that he was the apostle of love, that Jesus Christ when He called him to the apostleship, should have given him and James the surprising name, Sons of thunder; and yet it is no surprise. The same good kind mother who is filled with love, at times becomes a mother of thunder if things do not go right; and we may not be surprised at all on the Judgment Day, to find out that Jesus, the loving

Master, when He sees that He has finally been rejected, will arise as a Son of thunder.

Nor will it surprise us when we study the history of love more carefully, to find that this loving man, almost a hundred years old, carried into the church, saying to the people as little children that they should love each other, was the very man that above all others called men liars when they refused to tell the truth. In the text of today he uses these memorable words: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." The theme which I wish to dwell upon this morning is this:

Who Is A Liar?

May the Holy Spirit help us to examine ourselves carefully, and if we should find that we are liars, let us by all means, from this day on, strive by God's help, to tell the truth at all times.

I. A Liar Is One Who Does Not Tell The Truth

We would not be fair to the pen of John to tear this text from its connection. A liar is a man who does not always tell the truth. How many people there are who take offense when it is said of them, they are liars; and yet we know that when a man once commits murder he is a murderer. A man does not have to take the life of more than one person to be a murderer; a man does not have to steal more than once to be a thief; a man does not have to steal a horse, or thousands in gold to be a thief; the man who deliberately takes a lead pencil is a thief. The man who once takes the life of any man is a murderer and will be all his life; and I am only telling a God's truth when I say that your preacher is a liar, when I say that you are a liar; for there is not a person in this house today that has never told an untruth, and if you have told one untruth you are a liar. God's Word says. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor, and you can break that commandment just as effectually by breaking it once as you can the fifth, which says, Thou shalt not kill. If this hand of mine had ever taken human life I could never escape the fact that I am a murderer; and if this tongue has ever told a thing not exactly true, it has lied, and I am a liar. So you see there are liars just as many as there are human beings.

II. A Liar Says That A Religion Without Christ Is Good

But God forgives sins, and we may look upon the Christian when once forgiven as being now innocent. Therefore, I put the question again: Who is a liar? and on the authority of this chapter I say that he is a liar who says that a religion without Christ in it is good.

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come into the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of anti-Christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world.”

John assures us here that the anti-Christ is not one who stands up and fights Christ, but the anti-Christ is one who gives forth a religion without Jesus in it, and this spirit was to come and was already in existence in the days of John. And that spirit is around us today. There are very few ministers and very few Christians that weigh this point as carefully as they ought. Anything that looks religious to them looks holy; anything that looks like prayer looks Divine; and yet we all know that the devil is just as religious as any man on earth ever was, the only difference being that he is the anti-Christ, and any man who takes part in any worship, it makes no difference where it is, whether in church or a lodge, without Christ in it, is an anti-Christ and fighting the Lord Jesus Christ, because he is establishing that which is opposed to Jesus. Therefore, it only takes a little brain put into active thinking, to see that the world today is full of liars who are holding up a Christless religion.

III. A Liar Pretends To Be A Christian But Does Not Want To Hear His Word

Again, if I ask the question, Who is a liar? I answer, That man is a liar who pretends to be a Christian but does not want to go to God’s house and hear His Word.

“We are of God: He that knoweth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”

John distinctly decides in this verse that he and the apostles were of God. He goes on to say that he knoweth God heareth us. He does not say, goes and hears some one else, or sits at home and doesn't care what he hears. “He that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.” How can I decide whether a man is a Christian or not? How can I know, if a man has his name on the church book of the First Lutheran Church, or of any other church, and Sunday after Sunday I never see his face, and at the same time he is able to walk, able to attend to his business? That man is a liar, and all the favor I ask of you today is when you find him on the street, tell him his pastor says he is a liar, and tells him on the authority of God's Holy Word. A man has no right to call himself a child of God and then have no love for God's eternal truth. And we know this from our own experience. I need only to appeal to the Christian people of this congregation to find out the decision. That man who loves Jesus, who loves his salvation through Jesus Christ, who enjoys the communion of the Holy Spirit, that man would no more think of sitting at home on a beautiful Sunday like this, or running out of Sunday School and going home when he might remain here, any more than a hungry, healthy man, would refuse to sit down and enjoy his Sunday dinner. A man physically well wants to eat, and a man spiritually well wants to feed on God's eternal truth. How full the world is of professed Christians who are liars on the very face of the book that gives the record of names that says, I am a Christian, and in all their acts they are lying against God and heaven.

IV. A Liar Says God Is Not Love

A fourth liar is one who says that God is not love. now and then we find people who picture God as a God of wrath. It is not only a fact that God is Almighty, that He is Omniscient, that He is Omnipresent, but it is a fact that God is love. “He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.... And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.” Wherever we look in nature we see the love of God. Wherever we see a flower we see

that none but a loving God could have made such beautiful flowers. We often hear people say that Christians should not enjoy luxuries. If it were not our privilege to enjoy luxuries, surely God would never have made the thousands of beautiful things that are growing all around us. We could live on bread and water; we could live without the beautiful roses; we could live without all this variety of things that grow and walk around us; we could live without all these beautiful birds. All nature is filled with the voice of the love of God to man, and the poor man has the privilege of enjoying the love of God as well as the rich. Here is a man worth a hundred thousand dollars; he buys a lot and builds a beautiful house, and he enjoys what God has given him. Right beside him lives a poor man, not worth a thousand dollars; he not only enjoys his little yard and his home, but he enjoys his neighbor's home and all the world beside. It is all his. God gave it to him in nature. Beautiful love of God! Pictures of His works.

Not only is God a loving God, as we see in all nature, but He is a loving God as we see in His Word. There is a Spirit of love that breathes throughout this Book from the first chapter of Genesis to the last of Revelation, the whole plan of God to create man in His own image, and when he had fallen, to promise him a Redeemer, and sent forth that Redeemer as a Good Shepherd to lay down His life for the sheep; the whole plan of the Father and the Son sending us the Comforter, the Holy Spirit to fight with us and to remind us of all things the Son had taught; this great missionary plea that goes throughout the Word of God, to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; this call of the Holy Spirit: Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; this wooing love from the cross, God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life; this loving call from the mouth of God, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out," tell us that God is love.

And this loving God of ours can be trusted. And any man who says that God is not love on account of the Judgment Day, or on account of the lost condition of those who reject Him, is a liar and he knows it. I know there are many things in this world hard for us to describe. If I were to ask an unborn babe to describe the beauty of this world, it simply could not do it; and when I ask the natural man of this world to describe the beauty of heaven, it simply is impossible, and yet we can all see the love of God in

His Providence. Sometimes we seem to think that God is against us; sometimes we seem to think that instead of God being a God of love, He is a God of hatred; sometimes we seem to think He is a God who is fighting us instead of helping us along, but it is only because we are unborn babes in the greatness of God's plans. Oh, if we could see God's Providence as we some time shall see it! Then we would look back and thank God for every obstacle in our way, for every affliction that came upon us. For you and I need every now and then to be troubled. There must something come in the way to make us feel that no difference how high we go, we must come down. A friend of mine a few years ago ran down to the platform for the purpose of flagging the train. It was his object to reach the city at a certain hour, and before he got to the platform the train rushed by. With anger and wrath in his heart he went back, feeling that God was against him. The next morning when he read that just half a mile below that little depot that train plunged into the river and killed nearly all the passengers, he saw that the loving hand of Providence kept him from making that train. The other night in the city of Cleveland, a man tried his best to make the Twentieth Century flier, but just missed it. How he grumbled and murmured against the Providence of God, but when he read the next day how those men were hurled into eternity, he saw the loving Hand that kept him back. And so in the future, when our path of life is over, and we review that sad day of our affliction, when we smarted under the hand of God, then it is that God will show us why it was and how it was; and in heaven and all eternity we will not thank Him half so much for those days of joy and pleasure on earth as we will for those days of affliction, which were the Providence of the God of love.

V. A Liar Says He Is A Christian But Never Feared The Judgment

Who is a liar? That man is a liar who professes to be a child of God and yet claims that he never feared the Judgment.

“Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of Judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us.”

The Judgment will be a day of dread, as we sing in that good old hymn. The Judgment will be a day that will make men tremble, and will make some cry out, O ye mountains! fall on us, and ye hills cover us! And yet there is a possibility for men who will tremble at the Judgment Day to get so entirely rid of all fear that they can look forward to that day with perfect pleasure; that they may look forward to that day with boldness, because they shall stand before the Judge with the Judge’s own garment of righteousness on him, and when we have reached the perfection of that love which it is God’s will to give us, then we shall look forward with love and joy to that great day. I do not know that any man has ever been able to picture these three verses of the Bible more lucidly with few words, than the great Bengel. Bengel said of man and of the development of this love, that there are just four stages: The first is no fear and no love. The second is fear and no love. The third is fear and love. And the fourth is no fear and love. You see the growth. There is a time in some men’s lives when they have absolutely no fear of the Judgment and no love in their hearts. The natural man has no love to God and before he thinks at all about the future he has no fear, and he goes through life like the blind ox that goes to the slaughter. Then there comes another period of life when he begins to feel his sins, when he begins to tremble; when his only cry is, O, what shall I do? There is fear and no love. Then he begins to hear of Christ, of the loving Savior; then he still has fear, and love, and that is the third stage. Then he grows. Less fear every day, more love every day, and at last he reaches the stage in life when fear is gone and love is perfect, and he cries out now, No fear and all love. “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of Judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us.-’ Therefore, a man that says he loved God first is a liar. It is not true. God loved us first, and with His love we learned to love Him and to love our fellowmen. The man that says he can go through these stages and never have any fear of the Judgment at all, is a liar. If you are a Christian today there have been times in your life when you said to yourself. If the

Judgment would come now, what would I do? And yet it is possible for us to have perfect calm in the midst of seeming fear. As an illustration, the wife of a British navy officer went with her husband on a voyage to India. In mid-ocean a terrible storm arose. The officer was calm but his wife was very much frightened and rebuked him for his indifference. He went out and soon came back into the room again with uplifted dagger and seemingly aimed at her bosom. She smiled, and he asked her for an explanation. She replied, "That dagger is not dangerous in your hands." "Nor is this storm," said he, "in my Father's hand." Thus perfect love casteth out fear. ## VI. A Liar Claims To Be A Christian But Hates His Brother

There is another liar mentioned in this text, and that is the one who claims to be a Christian and hates his brother.

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."

My dear friends, it is simply impossible for a man to be a Christian and have hatred in his heart toward his fellow Christians. I would not speak of this so much as I do, if I did not feel in my own heart and see with my own eyes that there is so much hatred and so much conflict between those who profess to be children of God. A man that hateth his brother is a murderer. How can a man hate a Christian and be a child of God? If God is love and you have not seen Him, how can you love Him and hate your brother whom you have seen? This may seem like a small argument to some people, but it is a mighty argument. The truth of it is that you only love that best which you have seen. Did you ever try to love some man that you never saw? Did you ever try to love some woman that you never saw? Is there any human being on earth that you dearly love and have never beheld with your eyes? Even the blind man has seen his mother with a vision that cannot be expressed with words. If it is a fact that the objects which we do love in this world are visible objects, it is also a fact that God is love and we shall love Him, and He is invisible. We talk about our love for the invisible God, but how can we love the invisible God if we hate His visible children? If my children were to come into your home, and you had seen my child but had never seen me, and you actually hated my child, I am sure you would not

have very much love for her father, whom you never saw. How can you love me whom you never saw if you hate my children whom you have seen? And yet there are professed Christians in this world that hate this man and hate this woman; will not speak to this man and will not speak to this woman; will not shake hands with this man nor with this woman, and at the same time talk about their love to God. They are liars – downright liars, and in their hearts they know it. And, my friends, love does not simply consist in letting people alone and standing back and letting them run after you. I hear this voice: “I have no particular hatred toward Mr. So-and-so, but I just simply let him alone; I never go after him, speak to him, shake hands with him; never take a step to meet him,” Let me ask you a question, professed Christian. Have you ever gone three steps to shake hands with your pastor? I know some have gone miles, but have you done it? Have you ever taken one step to go to that very neighbor to whom you have not talked for a year? Have you ever gone to him and said, This is no way to live, let us shake hands and be neighborly, and love each other? Just as sure as any person on earth, I do not care who he is, professes to be a child of God, but has no love for this person or that, and is not willing to take the step to speak to him and shake hands with him and show his love, just so sure that man is a liar, and he knows it, and God knows it.

“And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God, love his brother also.”

It is a commandment from heaven. There is no other way to live. And Oh, may God the Holy Spirit teach us all this morning to cultivate a love for truth as we never have before. Let us no more be liars. Let us be so true to our neighbors, to our enemies, to our best friends, that if we find that they say one thing that is not exactly true, we will tell them. Stop your lying. We all need help. There is no one sin in this world any greater than lying. If a man commits adultery we put him down as low, and he is low, but how many people realize that he is just as high as the man that tells an untruth. The sin of breaking one commandment is just as great as the other. Therefore let us aim, not only to keep one commandment, but to keep them all, not because we expect God to save us therefor, but because He has saved us, because He has redeemed us and accepted us in the hands of love and now wants us to walk in His footsteps and to live as children of love. If

Jesus Christ were to stand here this morning and say one word that you knew was not exactly the truth, you would not take Him as your Savior, and yet you and I are to be children of truth. Let us not be liars, but be the children of Him whom we cannot see, and love all His children whom we do see, and therefore, be children of the truth. Amen.

Prayer

O Father in heaven, we thank Thee for this, another privilege of proclaiming Thy everlasting truth to a congregation of those who are striving to come to Thee, and therefore want the plain truth as it is recorded in Thy Word. O Father in heaven, do Thou send Thy Holy Spirit into our hearts and souls this morning with Thy great message, and help each one of us to ask ourselves the question. Am I a child of truth or a child of error? Am I one who loves the truth, or am I one who loves falsehood and practices those things that are loved by Satan? We ask Thee now that Thou wilt help us this morning to take this message home with us and to keep it, and to keep it for the special purpose of living just as near the Master as we possibly can, and may we pray Thee this day to give us such a love for those who hate us, such a love for those who despitefully use us, such a love for those who would injure us if they could, that we may pray for them and reach out our hands to do them a kindness, to walk in Thy ways and to be loved and to love our Father in heaven. Thou knowest how many people in this world have gone to destruction, not only because they have not recognized Thy love to them, but because they have experienced so little love on the part of their fellowmen. Do Thou help us to look out and around us every day that we may find some place to do a little act of kindness to some one, which shall show that we are not void of that love of Him who first loved us. Pour Thy love now into our hearts and souls, while we pray Thine own prayer which Thou hast taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

37. May One Be Sure Of His Salvation? *Second Sunday After Trinity.*

Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. 1 John 3:13-18

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

IF THIS VERY EVENING death should come to you, would you be saved or lost? That is the question. There are only four or five answers possible to that question. Some might positively say No, we would not; and O God pity the man that is not saved right now, because tomorrow he may be in eternity. Surely it is a woeful mistake to put off from day to day what God said you should do first. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Another answer to that question might be, We have not thought of the matter at all, and I believe that would be the answer of a large majority of people who are not saved today. They are simply living on from day to day and giving the matter no thought whatever. And Oh, what a condition of affairs that is for a man, just to live on from day to day, with brain to think, with immortal souls to save, worth more than all the world and yet never

paying attention to them. May God help you to think and ask yourselves the question, Am I saved, or am I lost?

Another answer might be, I hope so; I am trying to live a good life. I suppose there are a great many people in this day of universal religion without any Christ in it who are taught the old doctrine of the Pharisees to make themselves better instead of trusting in the blood of Christ, and possibly hundreds and hundreds of honest men and women really think that all they need to do is just to live about as good a life as the average Christian, and when they come to die they will be all right, and they will go right to heaven. That is one of the most remarkable doctrines ever published to the world. It is the doctrine of Satan and not of God. The truth of God's Word is that none are righteous, no not one, your own righteousness availeth nothing. The Word of God says, Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. You might just as well sit here tonight clothed in filthy old rags and tell me you are clean as to tell me you are going to be saved by goodness of your own. If you can be saved by your goodness, I can by mine, and if I can, every other man can. Then the coming of the Savior would all be useless; His dying on Calvary would not have been necessary; God's plan would all be in vain. Oh, do not deceive yourselves. You never can be saved by your own righteousness.

Another answer to the question, Are you saved? might be this: No one can tell. I occasionally meet with people who say that this matter of salvation is not a certainty; we cannot know; we may think we are saved and may find out after all that we are lost. It is true that some people may think that, but when you say that no man can know whether he is saved or not, that is not true. That is not Protestantism; that is Catholicism. There are a great many Roman Catholics who imagine that men can not know in this world that they are saved, therefore they must have Purgatory, but I want to say that God's Word never shows a third place. "Enter ye in at the straight gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction" – not Purgatory – "and many there be which go in thereat. Because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life" – not Purgatory – "and few there be that find it." As the tree falleth there it lieth. He that is filthy, let him be filthy still. The answer is not correct that no man can know in this world.

There is only one other answer to my question, Are you saved now? and that answer can be. Yes. Positively Yes. A man can just as well know that

he is saved as he can know he is living today. And, therefore, I put the question tonight:

May One Be Sure Of His Salvation?

The answer that John gives is very positive.

“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.”

It was no uncertainty with John. When you read these epistles through you find verse after verse positively stating “I know” and “We know,” We know this, and we know that. “We have known and believe the love that God hath to us.” If there is any one thing that is detrimental to Christianity today, it is this uncertainty of men going through life not knowing whether they are saved or not, not knowing whether they are lost or not. If this very hour you should die, – and the time is coming when you will die, – you want to know before it is too late that you are saved; and when I put the question tonight. Can one know that he is saved? I answer three different times, Yes. Yes. Yes.

I. Yes, Just As He Can Know The World’s Hatred

“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.”

1. Jesus Christ Was Hated

It is not hard for a man to know that Jesus Christ was hated. If you study the life of Jesus Christ you will find He was hated on all sides. The Pharisees hated Him. The Sadducees hated Him. The only people that loved Christ were the people that were willing to be saved. The whole world hated Him, and as a result gave Him the worst mock trial ever held on earth; as a result they took Him and mistreated Him as no other one has ever been mistreated. It is bad enough to read of the awful things done during the inquisition. When we read of how men were put into boxes filled with sharp

spikes that went into their bodies inch by inch until they were dead; when we read of how men were thrown into dungeons to starve and decay, it was awful. But when men die they are only dying for themselves; they are only bearing their own punishment; but when Jesus Christ died on Calvary, He did not bear His sins. He bore your sins and mine; and not only yours and mine, but He bore the sins of all the world, and those sins for all eternity. Therefore, if you can, just imagine for a moment, the pain of all eternity summed up and thrown into the heart of Jesus Christ, then you will understand what He had to endure on Calvary's hill. And who made Him suffer? The world!

2. The World Hated The Apostles And Martyrs

We not only know the world hated Christ, but it hated the apostles. Jesus Christ prophesied that these apostles would have to suffer. Jesus Christ told Peter he would have to be crucified. He told the apostles that they would all have to die for Him; and, my dear friends, while it is true that one of the twelve died a natural death, it is also true that he suffered a hundred deaths by being put down on the Isle of Patmos. Imagine him almost one hundred years old, put out upon the rock on the Isle of Patmos, to suffer day and night, until he was old enough to bring home and carry to his church to say once more before he died: "Little children, love one another." If Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, and Paul, all had to die for Christ, what made them die? The world hated them!

Not only is it true that the world hated the disciples, but the world hated the one hundred and eighty-five millions of people that had to die in the first three centuries of the Christian era. All over the civilized world the faithful brethren had to die for Christ's sake, because the world hated Jesus and His followers.

3. The World Hates The True Christian

How about the Christians today? Does the world love the true Christian? Never did, and never will! It isn't hard to know that. One of the greatest detriments to the Christian Church today is the fact that the Church is so loved by the world. Ask the average Christian, Do you love your brethren in the Church, and he says, Oh, yes, I love this man, and that man; here is one

I do not love so very much, but as a rule I can say I love this congregation. How often I hear my own congregation complimented. Wherever I go and they know the First Lutheran Church they say, You have a fine congregation there; you have a pleasant people, and it does me good to hear it; and yet sometimes it does not do me so much good. I am very glad to hear that a Christian congregation is a good congregation, but when I meet a man of the world and he says. You have such fine people in your church, I begin to ask myself the question, What is the trouble? The world never said Jesus was fine. The world never said the disciples and the apostles were fine. Whenever the world gets hold of an Apostle Peter it nails him to the cross. When I meet people who say, your people are just the finest people, I can almost hear the devil say, I just love some of your people; they are so dear to me. Have you got this man on your church record? Yes. Seems to me I can hear the devil say, I have got him on mine, too. I have got him! Well, but I say, these people come to church once in a while. Yes, I cannot keep everybody busy; I let them go once in a while, but when I want them, I have got them. There is something wrong! There is something wrong with the average preacher; there is something wrong with the average man in the pew. Just as sure as the man in the pew is loved by the world, just so sure he is not a saved man, or this Book is not true. That is the trouble with Christianity today. We are all good Christians on Sunday morning and Sunday evening when there is no other place to go, but when the world says on Monday, and on Tuesday, and on Thursday evening, I have got something for you to do, – no room now in the church for them. Would to God that the world did not love the preachers as much as it does! Would to God that the world did not love so many Sunday School teachers as it does! Would to God the world did not love so many churches as it does! It simply goes to prove, not that the world is becoming more churchly, but that the Church is becoming so worldly, that the world actually loves the Church. And what I said is only too true, that too many professed Christians have their names on the Church book, but the devil has got them too. Too many policy men. Too many policy women. Too many people who are perfectly willing to testify against the world in a little Sunday School room twelve feet square, where there is no world, but out on the street and on the highway, just as soon as they meet the world, it is, How do you do, world? Oh, how I love you! I will meet you tomorrow night at eight o'clock! A Christianity that will not absolutely stand up and fight the world, isn't worth

the having, and the true Christian will oppose the world until the world will oppose the Christian, and you know that the same world that crucified Christ, that killed the disciples, hates every true Christian on God's earth. Are you hated by the world? If not, I would not give a fig for your Christianity. "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you!"

ii. Yes, Just As He Can Know A Living Man From A Dead One

Can one know that he is saved? Yes, just as he can know a living man from a dead one.

"We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."

1. A Funeral

Let me take you out on a little trip for a few moments. The first place is to a funeral. We step up to a house where there is a sign on the door that the dead lies within. We enter the door and there we behold a casket surrounded by flowers, and in the casket lies a man. We walk up to him and offer him our hand, but he does not move; we lay our hand upon his face, but it is cold; we try to gaze into his eyes but they are closed; we speak, but he gives no answer. He is dead. Around that casket sit the mourners and the friends. Not a man on earth with a clear mind who does not know the difference between the dead man in the casket and the living people around it.

Let us leave that home, let us go up to the cemetery. We go through the arched gateway, we go down the drive; monuments to the right and monuments to the left; lots to the right and lots to the left; small graves and large graves; new additions added to the old; the cemetery enlarging; and as we ride along through the different avenues and come back, there is not a man on earth that does not know that this is the city of the dead.

We leave the cemetery; we come down one street, and drive up another; we drive across the avenues, and up and down the fine residence streets, and through the main streets of business, and when we have completed our

tour, I ask him who went with me, Do you know the difference between the two places we have been this afternoon, and he would be very ignorant if he did not positively know the difference between the city of the dead and the city of the living, And yet, my dear friends, the difference between the man in the casket, dead, and the mourners around it; the difference between those that lie in yonder graves and you who sit before me tonight, is no greater than the difference between a man lost and a man saved. John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life." And not only did he say that in this text, but there is passage after passage in this first epistle of John that says the same thing. In the second chapter, in the thirteenth verse he says, "Hereby we know that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." In the fifth chapter he says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments."

There was no question in the mind of John as to the difference between a man spiritually dead and a man spiritually living. When a man is a natural man he has no love for the Bible, no love for the Church, no love for a sermon; no love for prayer, no love for things good and holy, and he is in accordance with his own natural dead state, and the death of the world, and the devil and his own flesh. On the other hand, when he is born again, born of water and the Holy Spirit, and has a new life planted in him, then he begins to grow God-ward, heavenward; then he loves the things he formerly hated; loves to hear prayer; loves to hear a sermon; loves to live a better life, and whenever he can see a better way of doing things than he did before, he will do it, and wherever he can be fed he begins to eat things that will give him strength spiritually; and thus from day to day, he looks back and says. There is where I was; here is where I am today; I want to live onward and upward, and sing. My God, whereas I was dead, now I live. The difference there is between a man in the casket and the man who stands there weeping, the same difference there is between a man in the cemetery, under the ground, and a man in the city living for humanity, the same difference exists between a man spiritually dead, and a man filled with spiritual life. Yes, a man can know whether he is a child of God and that he is saved.

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.”

In other words, there are certain things that we must do if we are born again and if we love God, and that is, we must love our brethren. “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” If a man is spiritually dead he hates his brother and is ready for a fight; ready for revenge; ready to do evil to his enemy; but when he once becomes a new man, born from on high, he is glad that he can do like Jesus, and say, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. That is the new life, and that is the mark by which you can know whether you are a saved man or not. If there is a man here tonight who does not love his neighbors he is not a Christian, he is a murderer in God’s sight. The very fact that I cannot break your lock does not hinder me from being a thief. If I have hatred in my heart toward you, it only needs the opportunity, and a little more growth, to drive the dagger into your heart. True Christianity loves to suffer for Christ’s sake.

III. Yes, In The Difference Between A Miser and a Philanthropist

Can one know that he is saved? Yes, just as he can know the difference between a miser and a Christian philanthropist.

“But whoso hath this world’s goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.”

1. A Miser and A Philanthropist

The average man can tell the difference between a miser and a philanthropist. Let me draw two pictures, one of a miser and the other of a philanthropist. I take you first to the city of Genoa. In an attic is a miser who has in his satchel twenty-five thousand dollars in gold, not one cent of

which he uses for bread; his clothing is not fit to appear in public. There he sits day and night, simply counting over his gold and putting it back in the satchel, and one evening he finds himself so weak he cannot rise again, and laying his head upon that satchel he passes into eternity, and long after that, when his body is nearly decayed, he is found, starved to death, with his head on his satchel containing twenty-five thousand dollars in gold. There you have the picture of a Genoan miser. I will take you over to London and show you a philanthropist there, who came to that city from our own country, a little boy at the age of eleven years, gone away from home because his poor widowed mother could not support him. He starts out from business to business and absolutely refuses to do anything that is dishonorable. At last in the city of Baltimore, he finds a partner of his own kind, and those two men work together, always aiming to do good, not for themselves, but for their fellowmen. God puts into that boy's hands twelve millions of dollars. He goes over to London, finds the poor there, and gives them three millions of dollars. He is brought home, having died there, and laid down to rest in the little village where he was first driven out because he refused to sell to other little boys tobacco for them to smoke. That town today is named after the great man, George Peabody. Everybody honors him because he saved his country from financial ruin, set up institutions of learning, and because he was always looking for an opportunity to make someone happy.

In that same city of London I will show you John Howard, the great philanthropist, seeing how the poor were being trodden down by ungodly men who want every dollar they can get, he takes his money and goes out and buys lots and builds beautiful little houses, and says to every poor man who comes to him, Now, if you will go to church every Sunday, hear God's Word; if you will stay out of the saloons and ale houses; if you will send your children to school; and if you will have family worship, and wash, and keep clean, and work for the good of your family, I will give you these houses for rent for ten dollars a year. There you have the picture of a philanthropist. Now there is no man on earth so dumb that he does not know the difference between the miser in the attic in Genoa, and a George Peabody or a John Howard, and yet the same difference exists between a man who does not love Jesus Christ and a man who does. The one who is no Christian lives only for selfish purposes and for his own glory. I know once in a while we find a man who, though no Christian, seems to be very

benevolent. He also gives to the poor, but not for the glory of God; he wants the glory for himself. I do not blame a man even like Carnegie for putting up a library in every city if he can get the dumb public to pay for half of his monument; I do not blame him, but I do like to see men in this world who come around and hunt up the poor who cannot help themselves, and help them who want to live a good and upright, honest life. That is Christianity. I used to think that this man Carnegie was a Christian until a few weeks ago I met a man who had a personal talk with him. He asked him the question why he didn't help the Wesleyan University at Delaware. He said, "I have no use for the Wesleyan University." He asked Him why he didn't help the Protestant Hospital of Columbus. He said, "I don't care for the Protestant Hospital." "Why did you help to put an organ in the church?" "Because music is better than preaching." That is the kind of a man who is sending out his libraries for his own personal glory, because the world can get the poor people to pay for it. The difference between a man of God and a man of the world is this, the man of the world wants all the glory himself; the man of God wants the glory to go where it belongs, to God Himself. I say right here tonight, there is no man on earth, I do not care where he is to be found, that gives all the glory to God, but that he is a Christian, and the man that does not give the glory to God is no Christian, and there is a difference as wide as the difference between the attic in Genoa and the great Peabody. The miser always feels poor and shows no charity except with his tongue, while the real Christian looks for the poor, says little, and helps them, for Christ's sake. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." Amen.

38. The Mighty Hand Of God.

Third Sunday After Trinity.

Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. 1 Pet. 5:5-11.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

THE LAW OF GOD appeals to the conscience of man as being right. It does not take any faith on the part of the hearer to know that God was right when He said, Honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long upon earth. Every father or mother in this house this morning realizes that it is right that children should obey their parents, that younger people should be submissive to the elders, and consequently we find that the apostle begins this beautiful lesson with the words, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder." What kind of a confusion would there be in the world if the parents were asked to obey their children? God is right when He asks of you and of me to honor and respect old age and those who are placed over us.

And God is right when He asks of ministers of the Gospel that they should be responsible to the great Shepherd on high. He says in this same epistle, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready

mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." The duty of the minister of the Gospel is plain. On the one hand he is to give an account to the Great Shepherd on high, and on the other hand he is to feed the flock that food which God has given him to feed. How shall the shepherd feed his flock when he cannot find them? How shall the man of God feed his people when they loaf around at home and do not go to church? How shall the under shepherd feed his flock when they are scattered out among the wolves of the world? I have always maintained, I maintain today, and will maintain until I die that a Christian will hear God's Word unless he cannot, and the responsibility is right that every man of God must feel that if he is to feed his flock, the flock must be where they can be fed; and on the great Judgment Day we look to the Chief Shepherd for the crown of eternal life because we have been true to His Word and trusted in that Shepherd.

Not only ought we to find children submissive to their parents, and congregations to the Great Shepherd on high, and to His under-shepherds when they preach God's eternal truth, but it becomes the duty of all of us to be submissive to others, and especially to our God. "Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." It becomes our duty to become submissive to the hand of Almighty God. We are told in this epistle that we must humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. Oh, that we would all realize this morning what hand there is over us, the hand of Him who made the heavens and the earth. I desire to call your attention then, very briefly, to

The Mighty Hand Of God

And may the Holy Spirit help you to feel the power of that hand on your souls this morning. The mighty hand of God *against us: over us; under us: in us and with us.*

I. Against Us

Do you realize this morning that the mighty hand of God is against all the proud?

“For God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble.”

1. Pride of Angels

There never was a time when pride was not an evil. The first rebellion we have of pride is when that angel was not willing any more to be submissive to the King of kings and Lord of lords, but he was filled with pride and endeavored to rule, and the consequence was that that angel became a devil and is a devil yet. Whenever an angel of God resists the Almighty God on account of pride, he becomes a devil, and every time that a man is filled with pride, he is filled with that which is devilish.

2. Pride of Men

The Almighty Hand was not only against the pride of angels, but it was against the pride of all men in the past. It was pride in Pharaoh's heart that made him ruin his country. It was pride in Saul's heart that caused his fall. It was pride in the heart of a Herod that made him fall. It was pride in the heart of a Judas that kept him from repenting. Wherever you can show me a man that thinks he is better than others, that man is stoutly going against the hand of the Almighty God.

3. Pride Above Men

Why should any one think himself better than his neighbor? Why should you think that you are far above all humanity? Is that not a pride that comes from the angel that resisted God and became a devil? And isn't that the spirit that is making you devilish, and that is going to cause your fall? Every man that falls, first rises in his pride and then comes down, possibly never to rise again. Oh, if we would only stop and think what we are, and where we came from and what we have done, and what we have thought, and what we have said, we would all get down in true humility, and stop fighting against the mighty hand of God.

II. Over Those

Not only is this mighty hand of God against all those filled with pride, but this same Hand is over those who are truly humble.

“Humble yourselves, therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.”

1. True Humility

Look at humble Joseph, how God raised him up and put him on the throne of Egypt! Look at humble John, how God raised him up and made him the mighty apostle that proclaimed the Gospel to the world until he was almost a century old! Look at the humble Luther, how God used him to give liberty to the world! There is nothing greater in all the world than true humility, and true humility consists in this, that we consider ourselves poor, lost, condemned sinners, not worthy of the grace and the mercy which God has bestowed upon us from day to day, always feeling in our own hearts that when people say we are sinners, that they do not understand half the depth to which we ought to have sunk long ago if we had been left to ourselves. Now when we realize that we are poor, lost condemned sinners, and that we are saved alone by the grace of our God, then it is that we realize that this great and mighty hand of God is over us and lifting us up.

How often the Savior taught His disciples not to want to sit at the head of the table, but to be willing to go down to the foot. How often He showed them by His own example that there is no work in the world too low for us to do. If the hand of the Almighty God did not think it too humble on His part to wash the dust off of His disciples' feet, why should you and I consider any work in this world that is to be done, too low for us to do? Oh, God have mercy on the man that is too proud to get his fingers soiled with the soil of this world! God pity the man that is ashamed of callous hands! God pity the man that is ashamed to reach out and help the poor and lift them up! Let us be humble and have the mighty hand of God over us, and that Hand will lift us up in due time.

III. Under Us

Not only is it true that the mighty hand of God is against the proud, and over the humble, but it is just as true that this mighty hand of God is under all the troubles of His children.

“Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.”

I wish I could just get every one in this house to take the thought of that verse home with him, if he does not remember another thing, and he would feel amply repaid for coming here today. How many trials and troubles there are all over this world! Every home has its special trouble, one in this line and one in that, and the worst trouble of all is that nine times out of ten we are troubling ourselves about things that are no trouble at all. There are some things in this world that we absolutely cannot help. Now what common sense is there in troubling ourselves about those things? There are some things in this world that we can help. Then what common sense is there in sitting down and troubling ourselves? Why not get up and help them? Look at the little children in our homes. They put us to shame. Look at these little orphans as they sit here to my right. Are they moaning and crying because they have nothing to eat and nothing to wear? It never occurs to them. They know that they are going to get their three meals a day. They know they have people placed over them who are going to see that they have clothing to wear, and they are as happy as little birds, and their parents are in eternity; and yet here we are with our Father, with His mighty hand right under us, saying, Lay your troubles right on My hand and I will carry them, and instead of letting God have our troubles we want them ourselves and then cry because we have them. The story is told as a legend that one time the people were invited to lay all their troubles on a pile. Then they came, every man with his trouble, and every woman with hers, and threw them all on a pile until it became a mountain; and then, when they were all on that pile, God said to them, Now run and get any trouble you want – and each one picked out his own. You are not so dissatisfied with your trouble as you think you are; you love it, and there are hundreds of people weeping and crying, that would absolutely not know

what to do if they hadn't something to cry about. They are looking for trouble and they are finding it.

God is good. We all know that. God is Omniscient. He knows all about our affairs. God is King. He rules well. God never made any mistakes in the past. Study the history of people in ancient times, in deep trouble, and see if God did not lead them just exactly right. If God is good, and knows all about our troubles, and never makes any mistakes, why not just let His hand be under us and bear our troubles? I ask you today, in the name of God, to take that trouble of yours and lay it right on His mighty hand, casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.

The mighty hand of God is under you. Oh, if we had to go through some things that other men have gone through, we might not only understand the better what troubles are, but how to get rid of them. If I were to ask you to read Foxe's book of Martyrs, and you would do it, you would be the happiest man on earth seeing how many troubles you have escaped. I have here the picture of a man. Dr. Taylor, who in 1555, was one who preached in the little town that first heard the Gospel in England. This man had won thousands of people to the kingdom of God. The great Roman persecution came. The Bishop arrested him, took him to London, had him tried and condemned with a trial that was no better than that of Jesus Christ. Then he came back to the town of Hadley to be executed. He met his wife and children in the road, and said to his boy, "Lead a Godly life, hating all sin, and be a mighty man of God, for your father has got to die." He said to his little daughter, Elizabeth, "Do not cry, but be a mighty mother of God, and bring children into the world that may preach the Gospel for which your father is going to die." He said to his wife, "Dear wife, you are young yet. Do not remain single. Get married. Pray for a son to preach the Gospel, for your husband has got to die." They all knelt in prayer. He started out into the square where they hanged him up to a post, and before the pitch was burning, amidst a song of praise to God, who had His mighty hand under him, his head was knocked off and fell down, and he passed into eternity. That man never bothered himself about trouble. He just laid his family and himself into the hand of the Almighty God, and God held them all.

IV. In Us

This mighty hand of God is not only against the proud, not only over the humble, and under all our troubles, but is in those faithful ones who fight the devil.

“Be sober, be vigilant, for your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist steadfast in the faith.”

How can we resist him steadfast in the faith, unless we have the power of the Almighty God in us? There are some people in the present day who read such ungodly editorials as we have had in some of our papers throughout the last week, who are trying to persuade themselves that these preachers are all hypocrites, and that the Church of God does not know what it is doing, and that the old story of heaven and hell is all false; that there is no devil; that we have been misled; and the thing to do is to trample upon the law, and go and sow our wild oats, and do as we please, and be broad minded. We are living in a day when hundreds and thousands of people, pupils of this old devil, himself, are taught to believe that just as soon as you do whatever you please, and follow your own lusts and inclinations, that then you become broad. Sometimes we get hold of meat that isn't broad; it is quite square, and you eat it, and it nourishes you; and then sometimes you get hold of a slice of dried beef so broad and there is nothing in it. There are some people in this world actually getting so broad that you can see through them. There is absolutely no thinking done any more; they are running wild, saying there is no Satan, when Satan has got them in his clutches; saying there is no Satan, when Satan is moving them to transgress every law that is civil and Divine, and the time has come that we must recognize that the same God that reigned five thousand years ago, is reigning today; that the same old devil that went about like a roaring lion seeking whom he might devour, in the days of the crucifixion of Christ, is the same old Satan that these days is trying to persuade men that their souls are saved no difference whether they have a Savior or not; that they can live as they please and die as they please, and after a while they will pass into heaven, just as sure as they reject everything holy.

We note not only the mighty hand of God over us and with power under us when we are in trouble, but we need the mighty hand of God in us to resist the devil and all his works and ways. You need this Word of God in you, and then you have God's hand in you. You need the sacraments, and

then you have God's hand of grace given to you. You need the grand old Church that is built upon the Rock of Ages, in order that your mind may be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. I ask you, therefore, to have the mighty hand of God in you; have a faith that will not waver; stand upon the mighty Rock of God and fight every evil, no difference what it may be. We have too many policy men in these days, men that are afraid they might say or do something that might not suit this one or that one. How many of our best men are willing to stand up today and say the laws of our country and the laws of God shall be enforced? The worst of all is we have so many, among the good lawyers of our country, of these poor little pettifoggers, that are willing to stand up and help any man to evade the very laws they take an oath to defend. What we want, therefore, in the present day, are mighty men of God, men that have the hand of God in them, and become a power, and find out the truth and stand for it under all circumstances.

V. With Us

We need the mighty hand of God with us step by step, through fires to glory.

“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you.”

We have a great many people in the present day who want to be good Christians, but they want to go on kind of excursion rates; they want to be good Christians on easy terms; they want to lounge around on Sunday and sleep, and grow in grace; they are willing to fight their battles around behind the wall where nobody hears them; they are never ready to stand forth and pass through the fires. The plan of God in nature as well as in grace has always been that in order to get the gold you must have the dross burned off. If you will pass through the country in the present day and show me a field of nice wheat, I will show you a field that was plowed and harrowed first. If you will show me a beautiful piece of jewelry, I will show you something that has passed through the fire or under the file. No difference how rusty a piece of iron is, it can only be brightened by passing under the file or something that will grind the rust off. So in all nature you

discover that fire purifies. And thus it is with grace. “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen and settle you.”

You are willing to have the God of glory, the God of all grace, come to you and say. You are forgiven, poor sinner; you are willing to have Him throw the gates of heaven open and say. Now come in and enjoy this heavenly perfection forever and ever, but you are not willing to pass through the fires a while. We have here four beautiful diamonds, but they are all surrounded by a dark foil of suffering before we come to the jewel itself. After that ye have suffered awhile, then may this God of grace make you perfect, stablish, strengthen and settle you.

1. We Need Perfection

There is not a person on earth that does not feel that some time or other he ought to have a perfection which he has not got this morning. Oh, how we are disappointed when we find a good story, and the last half of the book is lost! How we are disappointed when we have a beautiful promise partly given, and the latter part is not found! How we are disappointed when we see a beautiful painting begun, but the artist dies before it is finished! Thus it would be in our own lives, if we were to simply go on, aiming for perfection and finally fail. It is God’s plan that the time shall come, when you and I shall have passed through fires a little while, to come out in perfection, and only with the hand of God with us can we pass through these fires.

2. We Need To Be Established

Our aim should be perfection, but to reach that we need to be established. The rainbow is beautiful to behold, but the first thing we know it has vanished; it is not established. How much grander the sun, that does not refuse to shine year in and year out. How much grander the stars that shine every night, and only wait for the clouds to disappear, to look down upon you with their bright eyes. Thus, my friends, let us have a faith that is not wavering like the winds or vanishing like the rainbow in the heavens, but let us have a faith that is as firm as the sun in the heavens, and as

established as the earth and the mountains, yes, my friends, as firm as the Rock of Ages. Established. You cannot be establish and not pass through the fires. God in His Providence has arranged that the character that is noblest can look back through the fires through which it has passed with the hand of God. There are some good men in the world that are good just because they have always been surrounded by good and have never met temptation. There are girls in the world who boast of their virtue and of their integrity, and look down upon every woman that ever made a mistake, just because they have never passed through the fires. All honor to the man that once was down and has come up through the fires, and today is a good man! All honor to Mary Magdalene, kissing the feet of her Savior! Why did she kiss His feet? Because He forgave so many sins for her that she could kiss those feet forever and ever, filled with love, having come out of burning fires, she is willing to quench those sparks with her tears. Oh, there is a grandeur in life that some people know nothing about, and it is this, that we be established and strengthened, having passed through the fires.

3. Don't Go Through Trials Alone

Yes, strengthened, you need these battles of life; you need these very fires; but do not try to go through them alone. That is the trouble with too many people in these days, in their troubles, in their pride, they try to fight their own battles, and they are getting into the fires deeper and deeper, and they never will get out unless they go through them with the great and powerful hand of the Almighty God.

4. Aim To Be Settled

After you have suffered awhile, then get settled, he says:

“...Make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you.”

That is one thing we should aim for, to be settled – settled in our convictions, settled in our faith, settled in our lives. My friends, settle it this evening that whatever you have to pass through between this and death, you are going with the mighty hand of God. Settle that. Settle it this evening

that as long as God gives you a brain to think, and strength in your limbs to walk, and health to sit up an hour and listen, that you are going to hear God's Word every Sunday, no difference what hinders you, for you are going to hold fast to the hand of Almighty God. Settle it. If you have temptations leading you into wrong, stop playing with those temptations; stop giving yourself the opportunity to sin, but settle it, and settle it forever that you are going to live aright in the sight of the Almighty God. If you have not had the correct training in religion, if you are at sea as to what you believe, do not think that anything is any more important than to take a course of lectures and instruction in the plan of salvation. Sit down face to face with some man of God in whom you have faith, and study and learn, and reason, and believe, until you can say, It is settled, and here I stand. I have respect for any man that is settled in the things that pertain to eternity. Oh, may God help us this morning! My friends, do hold fast to the hand of the Almighty God that is against the proud, that is over the humble, that is under all our troubles, and put in us to fight the battles against the devil, and the world and our own flesh, and with us throughout all fires, until we come out on the other side gloriously perfect, and established, and settled in the perfection when we shall stand in the presence of God with His righteousness, and then we can sing with the apostle those beautiful words: To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for a mighty hand held by Him who knows all things, a mighty hand that holds us, of Him who sees all things and makes no mistakes, and is a God of grace and of mercy, and is willing to lead us through the fires unto an eternal glory. We pray Thee that Thou wilt lead us on a safe path so that we may never wander to the right nor to the left; that we may be true to Thee and to our fellowmen. We ask Thy rich blessing on every one in this house this evening, O God, as with one voice we ask Thee to forgive us for all sins that we have ever committed against Thee by thought, by word, or by deed. We come to Thee this evening and pray Thee for special grace to keep us from repeating the sins of the past. May we each day grow nearer to Thee on that path of perfection, through the fires, led by the mighty hand of God. O Father in

heaven, do Thou now listen to all our prayers as we sum them up in that beautiful prayer which Thou hast taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

39. The Path To Glory. *Fourth Sunday After Trinity.*

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to-wit, the redemption of our body. Rom. 8:18-23.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS OF LIFE? There are only three views possible. Either you are looking for the glory of the lower animal, or you are looking for the glory of fame, or you are looking for glory on high. The great mass of of people living in sin are only looking for the selfish glory of the lower animal. The Apostle Paul has described this class of people so beautifully in the first chapter of his epistle to the Romans, that I cannot do better than just quote those words: For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that when they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God unto an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their

own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen." How many thousands and millions of people today are living for no other purpose than simply to glorify their own flesh and lusts, and that is their glory. Shame on the man that lives only for the glory of his selfishness.

There are others, however, whose object in life is fame. They will do anything in order to make their own names glorious. Before the world, like a Napoleon, they are ready to sacrifice all the wealth of France, and make the rivers run with blood, like any number of nations in history, like many an individual, they are ready to sacrifice Christ in order to lift themselves up and make themselves famous. And so you will notice that whenever a man wants to step forward in place of the God whom he should worship, that man is making glory of his own fame, and his life is useless.

There is a glory, my dear friends, that we should all aim for, and that is the glory of our text, the glory of those who seek the glory of God. "For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Let us, by the help of the Holy Spirit, this morning dwell on:

The Path To Glory

Observe: *I. Its beginning. II. Its ending. III. Its winding.*

I. Its Beginning

What are the beginnings of the path of glory? Let me lead you back this morning to the days before your birth. Let me lead you back and show you, first of all, the blessings of prenatal ignorance.

1. The Blessing of Prenatal Ignorance

Did you ever stop to think that if you had known what you know now, before you were born, that you never would have been born? One of the greatest crimes of the nations of today is race suicide; but, my friends, if we had known before we were born what we learned afterwards, it is a question

whether every child would not have committed suicide before it was born. Imagine that you had known before you were born that you would come into a world perfectly helpless for at least one year; imagine that you would have known that you might come into the world not wanted; imagine that you could have looked forward to the day of your birth, and could have seen that you should lie there without teeth to eat, without strength to walk, perfectly helpless; sometimes when you were sick you would not know what to do; when you would want to be left alone to have mother come up and shake you, when you would say, if you could. Just let me lie; you could not talk; you could not help yourself; you could not defend yourself; in that day if some one had said to you, Child, will you be born or not? you would have said. If I am to spend a whole year perfectly helpless, without making my wants known, I guess I had better not run the risk; let me never exist. And yet, my dear friends, it was this prenatal ignorance that was the beginning of the path to glory.

2. Parental Love

Then, born into the world, you found that you were in the hands of parental love. Oh, what a lesson to us who are living today, looking forward, remembering that the same love that prepared the love of our parents to take care of us when we were born, is the same love that is providing for you and for me day after day. When we in prenatal ignorance would have said, We dare not be born because we do not know how we can live through that year, God said. Never mind, I will take care of you. And He did. He gave us parental love. Is there anything in the world to be compared with mother's love?

Not many years ago in our own State of Ohio there was a young boy on the farm plodding day and night to keep his widowed mother and his young brother and his few sisters. Oh, what a struggle there was on that farm! I have seen it with my own eyes. Then the young man sat down at night by the fireside, with the light of a tallow candle, and read one book after the other, while his younger brother and sisters were asleep. There was in that heart a desire to be something. There was in that heart a desire to be some day what father wanted him to be – but father was in eternity and it seemed as tho' there was nothing left to do but for those hands to take care of mother and those dear children. And then one day the mother said, I will do

without new clothing for five years. Little girls, what will you do? We will wear our old garments out and beg others. And young man, what will you do? I will work, mother, just twice as hard as I did last year, if you will let brother go to college. And brother went to college; and he went there with a mother's love that was willing to sacrifice everything for that boy. That boy in college washed his own garments; he cut the hair of others that he might get spending money; and that boy went on working day after day as janitor of his church, and went on doing everything that he possibly could to earn his bread, which was scarce enough, while he was plodding through his mathematics and the languages, and standing at the head of his class. That boy went on fighting that battle, back of him a mother's love, and when the day finally came for graduation, there was sitting at the back of the gallery an old mother with garments too poor to be seen in the front; the class marched in, and the valedictorian was the boy that started from home, sent out by the mother's love; and when he gave that speech which touched the hearts of all, and made it possible for him today to be a mighty man in this great nation, it was only made possible by the love of the mother who sat back there in the gallery. And that is the love that today is in the hearts of our parents, taking care of your little children. That is the love that is found in fathers and mothers, making it possible for prenatal ignorance and parental care to lead us on a path to glory.

3. Prenatal and Prayerful Training

Not only do we find that this path to glory begins with parental love and prenatal ignorance, but it begins with prenatal and with prayerful training. We sometimes seem to think the way to make a man great is just to let him go on his careless way, let him shift for himself, and then finally come out a great man. My dear friends, when you fill up a well with stones, and father comes and tells you you have got to pick those stones out again, you will discover by the time you are through, that the first stone you put in is the last one you will take out. And when you have come to the end of life, and you go down to the depth of your mind and your own heart, and begin to bring out the thoughts one by one, you will find that the last thought before you die will be the first thought that ever entered your heart. And for that reason I make a plea this morning for earnest training of children. When Napoleon was asked. What is the great need of France? his reply was given

in that one word, Mothers! And if I were to ask today. What is the great need of America, I would answer. Fathers and mothers. It is the need that the Emperor of Germany is proclaiming over his empire; it is the need that the President of the United States is hurling over this land; it is the need that every minister of the Gospel should hurl into the consciences of the people – fathers and mothers, children trained in the home as the Apostle Paul was trained. What made Paul the mighty man that he was? The fact that he received the great training in his childhood which he did. And let me therefore call attention again to this great truth, that if you want to lead men to glory on the path which I describe today, begin in their early youth; pray for them before they are born; teach them as soon as they are born; train them every day, that they may reach the path of glory that leads to the home above.

II. Its Ending

In order that we may realize more fully the need of going on this path, let me show you its ending.

1. Glorious

The ending of this path is more glorious than Paradise itself. We have in this text today a picture of the universe since sin came into the world.

“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”

The Apostle Paul finds that when sin came into the world it not only hurt Adam and Eve, but it hurt the whole human race; and not only the whole human race, but the very soil of the earth; the thistle and the thorn came as a curse on account of sin, and all nature began to groan, and the animal creation had to suffer, and all this on account of sin. And so we find that Paradise, that beautiful Paradise was ruined by sin. But there is a day coming, my friends, when we shall see a glory that will surpass Paradise.

Paradise was a garden somewhere in this great land where there was no sin. Oh, the glory of that day when God saw all things which He had made, that they were good! But, my friends, there is a glory beyond that, – it is far greater than Paradise. There is a home on high where we shall be redeemed children of God. There is a home on high larger than the Paradise of old. There is a home on high where those who were lost have been saved by the bleeding of the dying Lamb of God. There is a home on high where not only the angels shall praise their heavenly Father, and not only the saints who have died in Christ, but where all who have come home shall sing the song of redemption, and there will be a glory in that home such as was never seen in Paradise. There will be a song of praise and love that Paradise knew nothing about; there will be the song of the cross forever and ever. Oh, the glory of that home on high.

2. Surpassing Earthly Liberty

It will be not only a greater glory than the glory of Paradise, but the glory of that home on high will surpass all earthly liberty. Oh, what battles have been fought for liberty in this land! During the past year how much blood has been shed out in the eastern countries and how many laid down their lives for the liberty of Japan! And in our own land have we forgotten that at least four hundred thousand men have spilled their blood on our own soil in order that we might this day lift these stars and stripes to all nations? They have been saved for our country and for a glory that makes us sing of liberty. And yet we must not forget that there are nations still in bondage. And while it is true that there are nations yet in bondage, it is just as true that the whole creation is in bondage. Did you ever stop to think of what suffering is going on today all over the world on account of sin? Not only men have fallen on the battlefield, but horses have fallen there. Have you stopped to think of the suffering that is going on this very day by men jerking the sharp bits in the mouths of horses, cutting their mouths open, all on account of sin? Have you stopped to think of the vivisection that is taking place on our tables in order that we might simply gratify our own desire? All over this world the animal creation is groaning. On your very hats today are the feathers of birds that have been killed for nothing but your Satanic pride. All over this world you find animal creation is suffering and groaning, crying out for liberty. The birds are singing, and we say they

are doing nothing but singing the praises of God, when many a poor bird is crying out. Liberty, liberty! can I never have thee? Many a poor animal is groaning and moaning today under the lash of the cruel whip, crying out for liberty, – Oh, for liberty, “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” I tell you, my friends, in that liberty on high there is a liberty that surpasses the liberty of our country, that surpasses the liberty of any country on earth. When the last day has come and God the great Judge has made all things right, then, then there will be a liberty that cries to the throne of God, and that is the liberty of the glory on high.

3. Greater Than All Easter Mornings

It is not only a greater liberty than we have ever seen or heard of on earth, but the glory on high is greater than all Easter mornings on earth put together. If there ever was a happy morning in the world, it was the Sunday morning after the first Good Friday; it was when the people began to recognize that He who was crucified last Friday is risen from the dead. If there ever was a joy it was that which began to burn in the hearts of those two young men who went to Emmaus, talking with Jesus, and asking Him to come in and abide with them. It was the joy that was found in that upper room when He with uplifted, wounded hands, said. Peace be unto you! It was the joy of the five hundred who saw Him after He arose from the dead. It was the joy that came on Pentecost when the fire fell from heaven, promised by the risen and ascended Savior. Oh, glorious Easter morning, when the angels of heaven rejoiced over the risen Savior! And since that day we have had many a joyful Easter. It is the happy day of the year. We rejoice on Christmas because Christ was born, but Oh, my friends, if Christ had not risen from the dead, what joy would there be on Easter morning? And what comfort would there be for you and me if it were not that Christ has risen from the dead, when we stand out in yonder cemetery? Just day before yesterday I had the extreme pleasure of kneeling on my mother’s grave and offering a prayer. That prayer will soon be answered. But my joy to kneel on my mother’s grave was not because my mother is dead, but because she is in heaven; not because her body is in this grave, but because God will raise her up. And so, my dear friends, there is joy in our hearts today because of Easter morning; but there is a time coming when God

shall not simply proclaim that He is risen, when He shall not only proclaim that our dead shall rise; but there is a time coming when we shall hear the trumpet sound, when the angels of heaven shall all come, not only a few, when Christ Himself shall run those hands of glory under every grave, and lift up all our dead; and then there shall be no dead any more; then shall be the great trial held on high; then shall be the inviting voice to call those that are redeemed and saved into the realm of glory on high; then we shall know what Paul meant when he wrote, “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to-wit, the redemption of our body.” When the body shall stand before God forever, no funerals any more, no sickness any more, no heartaches any more, no broken hearts any more, no sorrows any more, no revenge any more, no slanders any more, but all peace, and joy forever and forever, in the presence of our God, and the saints, and the angels! That is the glory at the end of the path of which I speak this morning.

III. Its Winding

Having noticed the beginning and the ending of this path to glory, let me call your attention to its winding.

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

1. On Earth

Please notice that the apostle Paul was down on earth when he wrote this letter; and you will please notice that this path of glory stays down here on earth. We have a great many Christians in the present day that are worshiping a dead Christ, and they are worshiping a Savior that lived two thousand years ago, and went to heaven, and there He is today; they come to the church of God and listen to God’s Word, they go home and sing their song of praise and talk about the heavenly mansions; but with all their praying and singing their hymns of glory, they never see the path on earth; they seem to see it away above the clouds, away above the throne of God

itself. I have no use for a Christianity that cannot stay on earth. We find that this path of glory stays right down on the ground. You cannot find it anywhere else. When Zacchaeus saw Christ coming he ran and climbed up into the sycamore tree, as if a better place to worship was in a tree than on the earth. Christ walked under the tree and said, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must abide at thy house," teaching him the great lesson that the path of glory is down here on earth. In the beautiful lesson of the Transfiguration of Christ, the apostles Peter, and James and John were up there in the presence of that glory. They made up their minds that that is the place to stay, and Peter suggested to Christ, Let us build three tabernacles here, one for Moses, one for Elias, and one for Thee, as if to say, O Lord God, let us stay up here on this mountain now, build three little churches here, and stay here, and get away from the world. But Jesus Christ said, Come down Peter, come down off of this mountain, come on down to Capernaum, come on down to thy house; and then when they got down to the house, a man came and said. Look here, Peter, have you paid your taxes? Never thought of it! Oh, there are a great many people in these days that sing about glory and never pay their taxes. Better come down on earth a little while and do your duty in your home. Jesus Christ said to Peter, You go on out and catch a fish. Peter said, I have caught the fish and have found sixty cents in its mouth. Now, says Christ, take half and go and pay your taxes, and take thirty cents and pay mine, and take a receipt, and then come back, and we will talk about the glory on high. Do you see what I mean? There is a religion of some people away up in heaven, of a Christ that is dead, instead of working with a living Christ on earth. Instead of looking around on earth and seeing what is to be done here, they are looking up on high. How many professed Christians there are, I say, who call themselves good Christian people, that can stumble along past the poor, the sick, the afflicted, the lost, the damned, and never see anything except something of the glory on high.

2. Through Suffering

This path of which I am speaking today is winding around on earth; and not only on earth, but it goes through suffering. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." The apostle Paul wasn't a man afraid of a little

suffering. The great trouble with our present day Christianity is that we want to go to heaven on excursion rates; we want to go easily, without any pain, without any suffering. If we are a little sick we take an opiate and die in our sleep instead of feeling pain, instead of being like Christ, who refused to take the vinegar, we want to sleep ourselves into hell, instead of getting a clear mind, repenting and going to God. We are living in a world where there is suffering; and suffering was intended that we should have it for our good. Remember that this path to glory goes through suffering. Can you show me a single man in history that ever went to glory, even in this world, without suffering? Peter might have stayed here on earth and had a good time all his life; he might have avoided the shame of being crucified with his head down. Paul, I suppose, if he had chosen to do so, might have said, I cannot go through all this suffering. What would have become of Peter and Paul, and where would have been their glory? If they had chosen to avoid the suffering, the greatest temple in the world today would not be called St. Peter's, and the next greatest that of St. Paul's. Why have they given those great temples such beautiful names as St. Paul's and St. Peter's? Because those men suffered and were willing to suffer for truth. I ask of the apostle Paul, What kind of a road did you go over? Here he describes it: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." I say to the apostle Paul, what is it that makes those big marks on your head? That is where they stoned me. What are all those stripes across your back? That is where they whipped me, giving me thirty-nine stripes five different times. What is that great big mark you have across your back there? That is the one that I got when I was thrown out of the ship, and was for a night and a day battling with the waters. What is that great mark you have on your arm? That is the mark of the lion when he held my arm in his jaws when I fought for life in the arena. Will you tell me about some of the rest of them besides yourself, how they suffered? Yes, I will tell you. Here is what happened: "And others had trial of cruel

mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned.” Anything worse, Paul? Oh, yes, I saw them take one of my own brethren, lay him down, take the saw and begin to cut him right in two like a saw log. “They were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the Sword.” Anything else? Yes, they took these friends of mine, took sheep skins, and goat skins, and put them over these men, made them look like animals, and threw them in to the lions to kill. “They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in the dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” Such is the path to glory! It winds through sufferings.

3. Over Troubles

But, dear friends, while it is a fact that the path to glory winds through sufferings, it winds over troubles, and that is the glory of the Christian life, that the sufferings, no matter how great they are, comparatively amount to nothing. It was that very thought that made the apostle Paul write these words: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” Paul, they are stoning you! They will kill you! Let them kill me. They cannot kill my soul. What is all this stoning compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us? But, Paul, don’t you know they are going to take you down and cast you into prison, and keep you there two years? Well, what of it? What are two years compared with eternity? – not worthy to be compared! But, Paul, they are going to take you out and cut your head off! What is the difference? It won’t take five minutes to do that. What are five minutes compared with eternity? “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” In other words, says Paul, my path to glory stays here on earth. While I am on earth I am going to be a good citizen, a loyal soldier of the Master. I am going to wind around wherever He wants me to go. I will stay here on earth and win souls for the glory on high. If I must go through suffering, I will go through – but remember, I am going through. I will not stay in suffering. If you men want to serve the devil and get into trouble and stay there forever,

stay. I am going through trouble into glory. And not only am I going through troubles, but over troubles – over them all. I will step upon the troubles as my Savior stepped upon the waves of the sea. I will trample them under my feet. I will look up to the glory on high. And all the time, no difference what happens, I will say. It is no trouble; I will step over it. There is a wonderful difference between suffering and trouble. I have so often said it to people, and I want to say it to you again: It is a shame for professed Christians to go around mourning as if God had died. Oh, may God forbid that Christians for the next hundred years to come will wear mourning for their Christian dead. Tear off the old black garment. Tear it off! What would your husband in heaven think today, if he saw you swinging the old black flag around, when he is glorifying with the angels on high? Let the time come when Christian people will rise above the low level of the heathen. Let us get above that low way of looking at trials and troubles. Suffering may come to all of us. We may all have to groan. We do groan. We do suffer. Pain comes and it will come. There are trials in every home. You do not know the trials of my home, and I do not know them of yours; but you have yours and I have got mine; but there is a God in heaven who gives us strength to go through troubles and over them. Trample them down and just simply say, I am a child of God, and whether I live or die, I am His, and I have no troubles. It does seem that when a man has reached his two score of years, and has passed them, he ought to know what he is talking about. Eighteen years ago, when I began my ministry, I told the people then, it is a shame for a man to have troubles. They used to say. Just wait, you will get your troubles! You will get them! Well, I have waited for eighteen years and I haven't found them yet. People come to me and say, I sympathize with you in the trials you have got. I don't need any sympathy. I haven't got any troubles. I never did, and I never will! Never, never will! That is one thing that is fixed in my mind – I will never have any troubles! I may have suffering; I may groan; may have sadness; but it will be the sadness of a child of God bearing the cross; and I urge upon you this morning as a child of God to remember that your path is upon earth, it is through suffering, and over troubles into glory.

In conclusion, as I look over this audience and see the hoary crowns, I am compelled to say. How near some of you are to this glory today! And yet, it is possible that some of you are further away to day than ever. If you are not true children of God, your age has added nothing to your nearing the

glory on high, but is only an evidence of your being further away than when you were born. May you prepare, by studying the doctrine of God's Holy Word, to reach that glory soon; and let me urge upon all Christians present this morning to go to work and find lost sinners, who will use the good sense to take instruction in the saving knowledge of God's Holy Word, that they may all reach the end of the path to glory – eternal life. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we ask Thy rich blessing to rest upon the message of the morning. We pray Thee that Thou wilt help us to realize that we are in a world that is sin-cursed; that we are in a world into which we come with prenatal ignorance; that it is a blessing to come into it, falling into the hands of parental love. O Father in heaven, we ask Thee that the maternal hands may hold all children to bosoms of love, and raise them for children of glory. We pray Thee, heavenly Father, that Thou wilt give a special blessing to the homes of our country. Arouse conscience in every home that will make every parent feel his responsibility to Thee and to the dear children whom Thou hast given. We pray Thee that Thou wilt help us to realize that this life is only a short space before the gate of a great eternity. We ask Thee that Thou wilt help us to realize that Thy glory on high should urge us here to live on earth and here to live among all people to bring them home to glory. We ask Thee to give us a missionary spirit, a spirit that is looking down and not always up, a spirit that is looking out, and not always in; a spirit that shall urge Christians in every home, in every neighborhood, in every corner, to do some good act to some one for Thy glory. Heavenly Father, today bless the Church at large; help that the nations of earth may all know there is only one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that every other religion is of the devil. Help us to realize as we never did before, what it means to sing of the glory on high, that it means to spread it here on earth. Father in heaven, do Thou now bless us as we are assembled here this morning in this, Thy house, and may the prayer of Thy servant become the prayer of all Thy people, and the prayer which Thou hast taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as' it is in heaven; Give us this day our

daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation;. But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

40. An Article Of Agreement.

Fifth Sunday After Trinity.

Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrarywise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile; let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it; For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be ye troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. 1 Peter 3:8-15.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

WE HAVE JUST CONFESSED in the Apostle's Creed that we believe in the holy Christian Church. We do not say the churches; there is only one church; there never have been two churches and there never will be; but remember, my friends, that this one church is not included in any one denomination. There are some denominations that are calling themselves the Christian Church, and by others, the Church of God, as if all other churches are not Christian churches or have no Christians in them. Remember, too, that this one church does not consist of those people who seem to think they have a perfect right to their opinions, no difference what those opinions may be. There seems to be a general idea in the present day among some professed Christians, that if they agree with the preacher it is all right, and if they disagree with him it is all right. It is all right to disagree with a preacher who is preaching his own opinion; it is all right to disagree with a preacher who is teaching you false philosophy, but when a man of God comes to you

with “Thus saith the Lord,” you have no right to your own opinion. God’s opinion settles everything. We read in the epistle of Paul to the Philippians, Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. As soon as we try to harmonize doctrines and opinions of men with some man, we are going to multiply denominations until we can hardly count them; but when we all make up our minds that there is only one Church, and that that one Church is the one that can say, “Thus saith the Lord,” Here it is written, and that is what God says and that is what He means, that is the Church, and I do not care where you find the members. This one Church of God must have the one mind of Jesus Christ, and it is to this that the apostle directs attention in the first verse of our text: Finally, be ye all of one mind. And how are we going to have one mind in religion? Only by subscribing to:

An Article Of Agreement

And that article of agreement must be made between the home and the church. I would call your attention to the fact that this whole epistle is directed to the church in general, and that the text of which I speak tonight is directed especially to the home. Whenever we begin to divorce the home from the church, and the church from the home, we will have just such a state of affairs as we have in many homes and in many cities of the present day. Let us then remember that this article of agreement of which I speak tonight, must be subscribed to by the church and by the home. The church and the home together demand four or five things that I wish to hold up before you tonight, by the help of the Holy Spirit.

I. The Christian Home And The Christian Church Are Inseparable

Both demand the plain preaching and teaching of God’s Holy Word. The apostle concludes the text by saying:

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.”

Do you know why it is that we have so many people in the present day who do not know why they belong to this church or that church? And do you know why it is we have so many professed Christians today that are never able to give an answer when you ask them concerning their souls and their doctrine? It is because the old catechetical classes have died out. It is because Christian instruction in the home has died out. It is because we have not got the Christian homes we ought to have, and because we have not got the proper catechization in the church that we ought to have. There is a place in old West Virginia where you can only find two books in every home, and those books are the Bible and Luther's catechism, and I have been told by those who have visited in that community that when they go into those homes and begin to talk religion, no difference if they are ministers of the Gospel, they soon find they are unable to cope with those families. They are men of only two books, but they know what is in those books, and they are prepared to answer any question you may ask concerning religion and concerning the future home. In these days of libraries by the hundreds and books by the thousands, we have people skimming over book after book, and when you ask them in regard to the contents, they know nothing. There is an old Latin proverb that says. Beware of the man of one book; and I say to you tonight, Beware of the man who has thoroughly mastered two or three books.

What we need in the present day, and every Christian ought to agree to this, is a home in which father and mother teach their little children from their infancy those prayers and those fundamental principles of the decalogue, those fundamental principles of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and all the essential doctrines, that they may never forget them. I only alluded to the fact this morning that what you put into a well first is the last to come out, and what you put first into the mind and heart of a child is the last thing to come out. You go into the home of some aged father or mother of whom it is said they have become childish, and what do you find? Just the other day, I had the great pleasure of seeing a man almost a hundred years old, erect and with a beautiful gray beard, at Chautauqua, New York. That man came there to visit his daughter, who had a beautiful cottage along the lake. There you could see that old man, nearly in his one hundredth year, hand in hand with the little children, walking up and down, playing and talking the same things that he talked when he was a child. The first thing in that man's heart is now the last thing in his life. We talk about

a man becoming childish – what does it mean? Simply getting down to the center of his heart and mind again. It means he is going back to those days when the first truths were poured into his heart, or when the first lies were poured in. And so let me urge upon you tonight, as the article of agreement that we should all subscribe to, to insist upon Christian instruction in the home and in the Church of God.

Why is it that we have reached that age in the Christian Church that people want to try to convert others in a few weeks time, and then let them run like sheep astray? I will tell you why. It is no easy thing to say, but there is a little human nature even in preachers, and that little human nature says, If I can do a thing in three weeks, that ought to take three years, I will try to do it in the shorter time, and the consequence is we have been trying to pour into our people in three weeks what should take three years of solid instruction. The truth of the matter is we have so many men not willing to sweat and work in the Church of God as a man ought to work in a harvest field. Let us learn of Christ how the children should be instructed. The Lord Jesus Christ said to Peter, Lovest thou Me? Yes. Peter, lovest thou Me? Yes. Lovest thou Me? Yes. Then what? Feed My sheep. Feed My lambs. Feed My sheep. How many pastors in this world are feeding the lambs today? How many pastors are teaching the children and instructing them until they positively know the plan of salvation, so that when they are old they can give a reason for the hope that is in them? How many homes are there where the whole family goes to Sunday School? What right has a father in this short life of his to stay at home and say, Children, you go to Sunday School; Mother, you go to Sunday School? Is this instruction in God's Word such a shallow thing and such a worthless thing that we can get beyond it? Where is the minister of the Gospel that knows too much of God's Word, that he should not take an interest in the Sunday School any more? Where are the parents that know too much of God's Word, that they should not find themselves in the class? And where are the families that have a right to be out of the Divine service? I would like to ask the question tonight, how many families in Mansfield are going hand in hand to the house of God to be instructed in the plain Word? And how many ministers of the Gospel are trying to reach the most ignorant man in the church? And yet, my friends, unless I can reach the most ignorant man in this audience tonight, I have failed to reach the most intelligent. The Gospel of Jesus Christ should be taught so plainly that the most common mind can grasp why these things

are so. And when the common mind, the most illiterate, can grasp a truth, the most intelligent cannot do anything more; and when a truth is presented so that only the most intelligent can get it, and the most ignorant cannot, it is not the truth as Jesus would have it taught. Then let us agree tonight to this great truth, that the Gospel should be taught in the home, and in the church, so plainly that no man can go out and say, I did not understand the message.

II. Every Home Should Have A Christian Mother Who Knows Her Place

There is another article of agreement to which we should subscribe, and that is that every home should have a Christian mother who knows her place. Our text follows a word from the apostle Peter to the wives:

“Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the Word, they also may without the Word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands. Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord; whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.”

In these days of the new woman, who wants to wear short hair, and the days of the new man who wants to wear long hair, we have too many people who absolutely do not know their places. If there is any place of honor in the world that is high, it is the place of the wife and the mother in the home, and just as soon as any woman fails to remember her place, just so soon she is making a monster of the family. We all pay to go into a show and see a calf with two heads, but how many a man goes into the home and finds a calf with two heads, paying nothing! How many a family has not only two heads, but three or four heads in it, and the result is that we have no homes at all as God would have them. When Adam and Eve were created. Eve had her place, and Adam had his, and this law has never been changed. The family is to have only one head, and the wife is to know her place. There

are some people foolish enough to think it is all wrong for a woman to wear jewelry, and at once begin to quote what Peter said here. You might just as well say it is wrong to wear garments, or to plait the hair. The apostle Peter is not finding fault with women for dressing, or for putting up their hair, or for wearing jewelry, but he does say that a woman ought to know in the home that there is something better than simply adorning the hair, than simply knowing how to wear jewelry, than simply to know how to put on a new dress in the latest style, but that the correct adorning of the home is the inward life, the inward soul; a woman who so lives in the home that if her ungodly husband will not read the Bible, that he is compelled to read the Word of God in her character; and when a woman will know her place in the home she is a power that is hard to get away from. You show me a home in which there is a wife who loves God's Word, and who adorns her home with a soul that loves the truth, a soul full of prayer, who adorns that home with all the marks of a true Christian wife, who will do as Sara of old did – she did not walk up and say, Abraham, you and I are the heads of this family; she did not walk up to Abraham and say. Now you have got to do this and that; but she said. My lord Abraham, I am thy wife; thou art my husband, and had we not better do this and that? What do you say, Abraham? “Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement” – show me such a home and I'll show you an ideal home. There was no question in the days of Abraham as to who was the head of the family. Abraham recognized that God was his head. Abraham recognized that he was the head, not only of his own family, but of that great tribe from whom Christ was to come; and Sarah, recognized that the greatest woman on earth, is the one, not that pays so much attention to outward adorning, but the one that has the Christian heart to make a true and faithful wife, and so she went through the world knowing her place, and today the world honors Sarah.

You can go down to some hardware store and you can buy a form, and put all kinds of silks and satins on it; you can buy hair and plait it and put it on the head of that form and you can get jewelry and put it on the hands of the thing that looks like a human being but has no life, but nothing but the grace of God can make a Christian wife. There are some people whom we can only know by their outward appearances. There are some people who have within them an unfolding. The more we read the more we see, and the

more we see the more we want to know, and the more we know, the more we realize that the greatest people on earth are not the men that sit on thrones, nor the women that want to be men, but the mothers who are mothers, indeed, and are planting into the hearts of their children and of their husbands the Word of God. Every man in this house tonight will agree with me that he wants a Christian wife. There are scoffers all around us that would not marry a scoffing wife if they could. They know that when the trials and troubles come into their home they want a wife who can lead them to the Rock of Ages, and if a man is ever so ungodly, he seems to have enough of the spark of God's life left in his heart that he does not want a bad, defiled wife.

III. Every Home Should Have a Christian Husband Who Knows How To Treat A Wife

And this leads me to another thing we ought to agree on, and that is that every home should have a Christian husband, who knows how to treat a wife.

“Likewise ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being true heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”

That your prayers be not hindered! And some of you do not pray at all. Your prayers are not hindered. But if you are a Christian husband you will pray. The apostle Peter tells us we have a perfect right to expect a man in the home to be a Christian husband, a husband who knows how to treat the weaker vessel, who knows how to treat his wife, who knows how to honor her, and place her where she rightly belongs, and himself where he belongs. If there is one want today in this Christian land, it is Christian men who know how to treat their wives. Shame on the young man that will go to see his intended bride every week and sometimes oftener, no distance too far, no gift too dear, but just as soon as she is his wife, then he seems to say, Now farewell; I may be home some night this week and I may not! Shame on the man that does not know his place! Shame on the man that does not know how to treat his wife! No wonder she is heart-broken; no wonder she

hasn't got the rosy cheeks she had in her maidenhood; no wonder she is weeping and weeping when he comes home; no wonder when he comes in the dark hours of the night he has to tell her he was at lodge and walked home when he knows he never was there: no wonder when she is sick and she knows he is the cause, she is going down to the grave with a broken heart.

Oh, shame on the man that does not know enough to be a Christian husband in the home! Shame on the man that hasn't got the same common sense to demand that his wife have a Christian husband, as well as that he have a Christian wife. There is no question about this. We will all agree to this, that every wife needs a husband that is a genuine man, that in days of trouble will not trample upon her sacred feelings; a genuine man who knows his place is in the home, who knows that it is his duty to train the children, who knows it is his duty to lead a pure and upright life, a genuine man who will stand by the side of his wife and support her as it was intended by creation that he should. God says in the first chapter of the Bible that He took Eve from the rib of Adam, and some ignorant fools laugh at the old rib story. There is nothing to laugh at. God did not take woman from the foot of man to be trodden in the dust; He did not take her from the brain of man to lord it over creation; He took her from near the heart of man, to be loved; from under his arm, to be protected; and a Christian man should know his place in the family. May God help some man in this house tonight, if he is not the husband he ought to be in his home, to know how to treat his Christian wife, and honor and protect her and support her, and when there are days that she is sick, let her lie down and rest, and help her, as she has many a time helped him. Woman is not a help-eat, she is a helpmeet, and man is not simply a boarder, he is a husband and should be a father in the home.

IV. Drawn Up By The Holy Spirit

These articles of agreement were not drawn up by some man; they are the articles of the Holy Spirit who pleads with you tonight to subscribe to them. In this article of agreement we find not only that the Christian husband should be in the home and in the church, but we find, furthermore, that the Christian altar should be there.

“For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.”

Yes, His eyes are open over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers. The eyes of the Lord tomorrow morning will be open, and He will look into your home, and He will look to see whether you are having any communion with Him. He will look to see whether the old Bible remains closed or whether you open it. He will look to see whether you read a chapter in the presence of your family or not. His ears will be open to listen to your prayers; but in many a so called Christian home, He looks and finds the old Book never opened; He listens to hear their prayers, but He hears nothing but quarreling, nothing but a slamming of the door, and anything but a Christian spirit. We are all agreed to this, that if we are Christians, the Word of God should be read every day. We are all agreed to this, that if we are Christians and have the strength, we should go to God’s house and hear His Word. Jesus said: He that is of God, heareth God’s words; ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God. When a man is no Christian he wants to get away from the Bible: when he is a Christian he wants to get into the Word. When a family is Christian, it will have an altar; when it has lost its Christianity, away goes the altar. Now there is no use in wasting words. A question: Is it right to have family worship, or is it not? Is it best to have family worship, or is it not? Is it best to have worship in the church of God, or is it not? If it is best, then, my dear friends, do not go home tonight and say, That was a plain sermon, and that was the truth, and go on and live like heathen all week again. If you have not got family worship, in the name of God begin it tonight. If you have not got an altar, have one by tomorrow morning. There is too much of this sitting around in the house of God and saying, that is true and right, and you are not trying to live one bit better than you did ten years ago, making no improvement whatever, hearing the truth and not obeying, hardening your hearts; and that is the trouble with the people today, hardened hearts in the Christian church. May God the Holy Spirit tonight probe into our hearts and into our consciences until we will recognize that there is only one right way to live in the home, and that is to have the family altar and hear God’s Word, so that the boys and girls may know that father is not a heathen and mother is not a heathen; and that father and mother may know that the children pray. There are Christian parents, I will dare say, sitting before me tonight, who have not

heard their sons pray for years, who have not heard their daughters offer a prayer. You imagine they are kneeling before their beds every night, when they are going to sleep like cattle. It is not simply enough that we tell our children to pray; they must hear our prayers; they must know that father and mother are praying for them. We would not find so many divided families and broken-hearted mothers, if family worship were conducted as it ought to be in our Christian homes.

And if we would pray as we ought to in our homes, we would pray in the church. The house of God is the house of prayer, and we ought to enter that house and bow our heads in prayer. I think about three people out of fifteen hundred do it; I do not know what the other fourteen hundred are going to do about it. The church is no theater; it is the house of God; it is the place to come and bow your head and stand and offer prayer, and ask God to help you now to get a message that will be a blessing to your soul. And if we would come into the house of God and worship as we ought, we would get a blessing we are not getting at the present time. It takes just as much preparation for you to hear this sermon as for me to preach it. Are you prepared? The place to begin is at the family altar at home.

V. We Should Live Converted Lives

Another article of agreement, and the last one, is, this: We should live converted lives.

“Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.”

There are about twenty-five sermons in those words, but we can combine those twenty-five sermons in two thoughts, and those thoughts are these: Live a converted life – in other words, live away from the life of the heathen; and live above the life of yesterday.

I say live away from the life of a heathen. We have here the difference plainly taught between the natural man and the Christian. Not rendering evil for evil. The natural man wants revenge. If any one hates him, he hates the

other. If any man does him harm, he is watching his chance that he may do harm again. In other words, he does not understand at all what Jesus meant when He said, Love your enemies; bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. How often we find, right among professed Christians, a feeling of hatred and revenge. Professed Christians live side by side and never speak to each other, and because one has done the other a little harm, the other is just waiting for a chance, as we commonly say, to get it back on him. Do you not see that this is only a heathen life? Do you not see that this spirit of revenge is hurting the Christian church, and that it is a comfort to the heathen, himself? Now, pray tell me, if I have an enemy, what am I to do? Just two things are possible. One is to punish him, and the other is to pray for him. Suppose I punish him – that is the natural inclination – suppose I am a stronger man than my enemy, I catch him by the throat, throw him on the floor and begin to hammer his face, and I beat him until his eyes are swollen shut, and I make the blood flow, then I step back and say. Now I have revenge! What have I done with that man? Made him a worse enemy than he was before, that is all. This article of agreement demands of me something else. It is natural to hate my enemy. Turn around, be converted; instead of going with your face toward hell, turn heavenward; instead of hating your neighbor, pray for him; instead of abusing him, treat him with love; instead of hammering his face, give him a gift; treat him the best you know how. What have you done? You have conquered him, made him your friend. Which is the better? Can you not see that Christ was right when He said. Love your enemies, bless them which curse you; pray for them which despitefully use you? Oh, dear friends, what we want to do is to live away from the heathen life, and above the life of yesterday.

“Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.”

In other words, dear friends, if we want to subscribe to these articles of agreement, we must make up our minds if we are converted, and want to be converted, we must live converted lives; we must lead such lives that all those around us can see that we are children of light. And if all the professed Christians in the world would just make up their minds tonight that they are either going to go out into the world and say goodbye to the church forever, or else do the right thing and live as God wants them to live,

there would be such a power manifested in the church that the world could never get away from it.

Two questions in conclusion: Are these things true that I have told you tonight? You know they are. I will not pray tonight as I used to hear a certain preacher pray: "Lord, if I have said anything today that isn't right, forgive me!" We have no right to say a thing that is not right. These things are true, and you cannot get away from them, and you know it. Sometimes men when they hear the truth, talk with their mouths as though they didn't like it; but I like to make a man argue with his heart. When his tongue says, I don't like it, I want his conscience to say. You must like it. Not one can go out of this house tonight and say conscientiously, I do not believe what I have heard. No one can say in his own heart. These things are not practical.

Another question: Knowing that this is the truth, what are you going to do with it? As I said a moment ago, there is too much of this thing of letting the truth go in at one ear and out of the other; there is too much of this thing of hearing the truth, and going home and going on just the same as before. I believe a man ought to be honest with his own soul. If he is going to be dishonest, let him be honest enough not to try to deceive the world by making people believe he is a Christian in the home when God knows he is not. No, we must remember that the eyes of the Lord are open over the righteous, and His ears are open to our prayers. His eyes being opened, let Him see that we are reading His Word, and let Him know that we are going to Him in prayer.

And how about the other man? What about the man that is not here tonight? What about the woman that is not here tonight? Are you simply here to get the truth for your own soul? Are the souls of others not as good and valuable as yours? Then what? We all need exactly what I have told you tonight. We need to have a reason for the hope within us. The world needs Christian families. The time is close at hand when a catechetical class will begin for adults, and for children, and for every immortal soul, and the question arises. What are you going to do about it? Are you going to wait until some Sunday you hear that next Friday evening the class for adults will begin, and next Saturday morning the children's class, and Saturday afternoon the young peoples' class begins? No. Right now, begin and look around in your home, and among your friends, and see if you cannot find some soul to be instructed in God's Word, that he may this winter yet come to the Savior and be saved and be an instrument to save others, and know

why he believes this and that, and be an intelligent Christian, who can give a reason for the hope that is within him. That is the kind of work we must do, and go on, in God's name, and keep the church growing until the kingdom of this world shall be the kingdom of God.

Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, we thank Thee for this beautiful Sunday, and for the privilege we have had of proclaiming Thy Word in its purity and power. We pray Thee that Thou wilt bless this message to the souls of all those who have heard this truth, and say to us in plain words that can not be misunderstood, Go, work today, in My vineyard. O God in heaven, help that every family represented here today, may tonight yet, and tomorrow morning, read Thy Word, that Thine eye may see them read, and offer a short prayer to the throne of God, that Thy worship may dwell in every home. O God, help every husband to know his place as a husband and a father. Help every woman in the home to know her place as a wife and a mother. Help the children, O God, that they may receive the legacy of the Christian home, worth more than farms and all the gifts that this world can offer. Dear Lord and Master, go with us to our respective homes, throughout this week, and the journey of life, and help us that we may not only come to Thee ourselves, but be instrumental in bringing many others to Thee. And on this journey of life let us pray for the soul much more than we do for the body, in that prayer which Thou, Thyself hast taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

41. We Should Not Serve Sin.

Sixth Sunday After Trinity.

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. 6:3-11.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

WE HAVE NOT COME HERE THIS EVENING for the purpose of hearing my opinion or asking for yours. We came here this evening with a “Thus saith the Lord.” We want to know what God has to say to our souls. This epistle of Paul to the Romans is full of the bread of life, full of great truths that no one can deny. In the previous chapter he was showing the Romans how through one man, Adam, sin came into the world and brought about its condemnation. In the same chapter he shows us how through another Adam, Jesus Christ, salvation came for the whole world, and that, tho’ sin is great, grace is yet greater, and therefore there is hope for every sinner who repents and accepts the only Savior. He says: “Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” The Apostle Paul was a great logician, a man who was always trying to gather,

What will the people think, and how will they reason? and to his mind it was only a step from what he had taught to a great error. It is a truth that sin came into the world through one man, and condemned the whole world; it is a truth that righteousness came through Jesus Christ to save the whole world, but it is only one step to a great error, and that is, the people might reason, if sin is great and grace is greater, then why may not the Christian go on sinning away, depending upon the greater grace, and so he put the question: What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? It would be a wrong conclusion, says Paul, for us to think that because grace is greater than sin, that therefore we can go right on and sin and still be saved. The answer to the question, Can we sin on willingly if we are Christians? is given in the sixth verse here where it is said we should not serve sin. May the Holy Spirit take these few words this evening and impress them deeply on your hearts:

We Should Not Serve Sin

- I. Because we were baptized into Christ's death.
- II. Because we were baptized into His resurrection,

“Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death... that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life?”

I. Because We Were Baptized Into Christ's Death

In these words we see the whole sum and substance of Paul's message. We in the first place were buried into Christ's death; therefore we should not serve sin, for it was sin that nailed Jesus to the cross; it was sin that tormented Him on the cross; it was sin that brought Him down to death. Now then, says Paul, if you are baptized into that death and into that resurrection of Jesus Christ, are you going to crucify Him over and over again by continuing in sin? Yes, sin is great and grace is greater, but do not for a single moment think that you have a right, as a child of God, to sin on,

with the view that God's grace will cover over your sin, and you can be a child of the devil under the garb of religion. What is sin? We cannot too often ask that plain question. The answer of the Bible is, It is the transgression of the Divine law; and transgression means to step over. God's law is very plain. Every child that can count its ten fingers should be taught the ten commandments, and should know from infancy that it is a sin not to know who the true and living God is; that it is a sin to take God's name in vain; that it is absolutely a sin not to keep the Sabbath Day holy. Men should know that not to hear God's Word is a sin. God gave men ears to hear His Word. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. I have sometimes wondered why God in His justice does not simply strike men deaf that refuse to listen to Him; and yet there is an answer to this question. God is merciful! Oh, the mercy of God that permits men to have ears to hear and yet will not listen to Him! It is a sin not to honor father and mother. It is a sin to hate your fellow men. It is an absolute sin to live an impure life in thought, or word, or deed. It is a sin to commit adultery. It is a sin to commit fornication. It is a sin to steal. It is a sin to tell anything that is not exactly true. It is a sin to covet anything that is movable or immovable, animate or inanimate. A curse will rest upon you if you continue in your sins, and upon your children. A blessing will rest upon you if you try to serve your God and Master, not only on your children, but for a thousand generations. Friends, it is sin that nailed Jesus Christ to the cross.

It was sin that striped His back; it was sin that spit in His face; it was sin that pressed the sweat like drops of blood out of His forehead in Gethsemane; it was sin that made men slap His face and pull the black cap across it, and strike it with their fists; it was sin that moved the governments of the world and the ecclesiastic courts hand in hand to drive the nails through the hands of the blessed Redeemer, and through His feet, and pierce His breast and heart; it was sin that mocked Him and tormented Him; and permitted Him to hang for three hours in the light, and three hours in the darkness, tormenting Him, with the very curse of God, because He took your sins and mine upon His shoulders. And now, do you think it is right, because God's grace is great, to drive those nails through His hands again? Do you think it is right to continue in sin because God is merciful and forgiving?

Not only did our sin nail Christ to the cross and torment Him, but sin brought Him down to death. It was sin that gave Him the torment of hell

when He cried out: My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me? If you are tempted this very hour not to keep the Sabbath Day holy; if you are tempted in this very hour to commit adultery; if you are tempted to do wrong of any kind, remember that you are helping Jesus Christ to say. My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me? It was sin that called upon your Lord and Master to give up His life and say: Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit. It was sin that caused those hands that had nothing but blessings, to hang there cold in death. It was sin that made that body, born of the Virgin Mary and begotten of the Holy Spirit, to hang there in cold, icy death. And you love sin, and you continue in sin? God forbid! says Paul. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Now, says the Apostle Paul, when Jesus Christ died, and was put into the grave. He redeemed us; our redemption was finished; and when you were baptized, you were baptized into Jesus Christ and into His death. Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? There we are buried with Him, by baptism, into death. In ancient times there were many forms of baptism, as far as the water is concerned, but never more than one form as to the words. The Lord Jesus Christ was very explicit as to the form of baptism. He said they should go out into the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The form is God's Word, and water. But as far as the water is concerned, we are taught by history and by the etymology of this word, that there were different forms. The word baptize itself means to plunge, to immerse, to cleanse, to purify. The form that was used in ancient times in warm countries was to take the people and plunge them under the water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and you will find many ancient landmarks, many a baptismal font large enough to take the little babe and sink it under the water. The very German word "*taufen*" means to say, as it were, to dip under; and we simply are not true to the etymology of God's Word if we do not admit that immersion as a form is all right. What we object to is when men say that it is the only way to be baptized, for from the beginning of the church, people in sickness and weakness were sprinkled, and different forms used, and for that very reason, just because infants are born in sin and should be baptized, and as a rule are weak, early in the church of God sprinkling became the very form; but there is no question about the fact that

immersion had something to do with the molding of the language of the Apostle Paul when he said. Therefore we are buried with Him, by baptism, into death. He had in mind the fact that many people were put under the water. But he did not say, my dear friends, that unless you are immersed you are not baptized. He did not say when you are baptized, you are baptized into water, but you are baptized into the death of Christ, and I am baptized into His death and buried into His death just as much by being sprinkled as you were by immersion. Baptism is, therefore, that form through which God takes the sinner and puts him into the death of Jesus Christ. In other words, the moment you are baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, you have got the benefit of Him who died on the cross and was laid down in the grave; and as Jesus was in the grave, and came out on Easter morning, just so you and I by this baptism go into the death of Christ and shall come out – not out of the water, but come out every day with a new life and live for God. So God takes a man and puts him into the grave, covers him over, packs the ground and plants the flowers; those flowers grow over the dead; and just so when we are baptized, we bury the old Adam and plant on that grave the roses of a new life, and live for God, not in sin, but in righteousness and holiness. And therefore, my friends, we should not serve sin, because we are buried into the death of Christ.

II. Because We Were Baptized Into His Resurrection

But we are not only buried into His death; we are also buried into His resurrection.

“Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.”

In other words, when we were baptized there was a new life planted in us, and that new life is the life of the risen Lord. Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. And, Verily, I say

unto you, except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven. In other words, we are clearly taught by the Lord Jesus Christ that baptism is the means of regeneration, and that regeneration is just necessary spiritually as the first birth is naturally. I cannot help it that I was born; it was not my say so; my parents brought me into the world; I had nothing to do with that. You had nothing to do with your regeneration. It is the work of the Holy Spirit. He is the father of your new birth in the church of God, with Holy Baptism as the mother. Therefore Jesus gave the command to the disciples to go into the whole world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. As I said in the beginning of my sermon, I am not here to give you my opinion, nor to ask you for yours; but I am here to say that the church that does not insist upon the baptism of all who shall be saved is not Scriptural. I am here to say that the church of God that does not go out and baptize its members is not carrying out God's plain and explicit command. I said to the leader of our Salvation Army the other day, You try to make us believe you are carrying out God's command. Jesus said to you: Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and you do not do it. Why don't you do it? He hasn't given me the answer. I would like for any man to answer that. Why doesn't he do what God told him to do? Where does God draw a line and say you are to baptize old stubborn sinners, but let the little children run and grow up like weeds? Listen: Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Do you want to be buried into Christ's death and resurrection and let the children go? Do you want part of your family buried into Christ's death and resurrection and the other part not? Where did God draw such a line? This whole chapter before my text tells us that through one man the whole world was led into condemnation, and through the other man, Jesus Christ, the whole world was led into grace. Why draw a line where God never drew any? There is one sin that damned the world, and there is one grace to save, and it is our duty to know that we must not serve sin, but we shall rise with the newness of life that God gave us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Therefore, when you are baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, you are not baptized into a name, you are baptized into Jesus' death and into His resurrection, and as Jesus arose from the grave by the glory of

the Father, so in the heart of the baptized child there is planted a seed, a seed that is to develop into a great life day by day.

Not only is it true that we must not serve sin as baptized people into the resurrection, but we must wear the cloak of Jesus' righteousness. What does that verse mean when it says: As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ? Not that you have put on a cloak of water; not that you have got to go into the Jordan and put on the water of the Jordan, but whether you are baptized in the river or before the altar, whether with a handful of water or a bucketful, the moment you are baptized, you are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ, who rose from the dead, and that resurrected life of His in your heart must have you to rise, and you must rise with Jesus Christ all around you, have His cloak of righteousness; therefore the Gospel lesson of today tells us: Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. And mark you, if you think you are a better man than the scribes and Pharisees were, you are mistaken. Jesus was not holding up a scoundrel and telling you that unless your righteousness exceeded the righteousness of the scoundrel, you should not enter the kingdom of heaven; but he held up before the people the best men in Jerusalem – the scribes and Pharisees – the D. D.'s, the teachers of God's Word, the best men in the community, and tells you that unless you are better than the best men you can never enter heaven. You have got to put on Jesus Christ. That is our salvation, and that is what he means when he says you must not serve sin. You must not think that you can be a Christian and be baptized, and then go right on and serve the devil as you did before. How many people there are that come to the altar, and are baptized, and think they have gone through with a set form; think, now I will not go to church, but I will live right on like a child of the devil as I did before! No, when you are baptized you have put on Christ and you dare not do a thing that you would not do with Christ in your company. How many of you would live as you do, walking hand in hand with Jesus Christ? How many of you would live as you do if you could draw Jesus Christ right over you and walk on the streets of Mansfield as your Savior? That is the kind of life to live, and that leads me to say:

Concerning this baptism into the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that we must not think that we can make a cemetery of Jesus Christ to bury a live man in, the old Adam. How many people there are who want to be

Christians, but they want to keep that old Adam alive and just hide him in Christ.

Do temptations come to Christians? Once in a while we meet some of these goody-goody people, so sanctified that they actually cannot be tempted any more at all; no temptation comes to them any more to do anything that is wrong; we sometimes look around for their wings, but we cannot find them. My dear friends, I want to say right here, that there are people in the world of whom I feel sure they are not tempted at all. Why should the devil tempt his own? Why should he do it? But mark you, if you are a child of God, you will be tempted and tempted severely. Are you better than your Savior? Wasn't He tempted? Did Jesus not know what He was doing when He taught you to pray, Lead us not into temptation? Do you say that prayer should be prayed by all except those perfectly sanctified? No, if you are a child of God you may rest assured that you have still got an old Adam with whom you have got to wrestle and fight until you breathe your last breath, and your daily prayer must be, Lead me not into temptation! You have got a battle to fight. Paul did not say. Before I was converted, or in the first years of my Christian life I had a battle to fight; but no, one of the best men that ever lived, one of the best Christians that ever lived, one of the noblest soldiers that ever lived, in his very last moment he said: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith! He did not say, I had a battle to fight and struck at nothing. He had a battle to fight and fought it. And what made that battle? It was to take this old Adam and bury him completely, and win the victory.

Do you know why it is so many Christians fall? It is because they do not take a firm stand against sin. You cannot trifle with temptation. There are too many Christians that just want to trifle a little bit with this little sin and that little sin; they do not want to be real bad, but just a little, and so they keep on, and the first thing you know the devil has won the victory. We have an illustration of what this battle means in a violinist found in the mission of [Louis Harms of Africa](#). Down there, as you know, among the heathen, they are great people to dance and play stringed instruments; and among those who played for the dance was one very intelligent man who heard the Gospel as preached in the Lutheran mission. This man was so impressed that he made up his mind he is going to become a Christian, and he was baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, thoroughly instructed as to what it means that now he has put on Christ; that he must

now walk in this world as if Christ were all around him. He thought this would be such an easy thing to do, but before the next week was past he was asked to play for the dance. He just loved that old violin and they always paid him well to play, and there came the temptation. It never occurred to him that he would have to give up that kind of a life, and so he said, "But I have put on Jesus Christ and I do not believe Christ would play for you; I guess I will not." Then they made fun of him and ridiculed him. The more they ridiculed him the greater came the temptation, but he refused. He said, "I will not play for you any more." Then he sat down and tried to comfort himself by playing over the tunes all alone. The next week he started out to earn his living by hard toil. How hard it was for him to earn a living and work hard under the burning sun and come home with only a few pennies, when he could have earned the same amount in a few minutes at the dance! The temptation grew worse and worse. Shall I remain a true Christian or not? Shall I work hard all day and earn only a few pennies and be a Christian, or play for these people to dance in their sinful dance in this country, and live at ease? The temptation grew stronger. At last he said, "I see only one way to settle this," and he drew back his violin, hurled it on a rock, and smashed it to pieces! The temptation was gone. Right there is the trouble with us. We want to play the old violin and keep it. Hurl it against the rock and be done with it! You men who are drinking just a little bit and do not want to be drunkards, and still want to be good church members, stay out of the saloon. Hurl the violin against the rock and you will be saved, and that is the only way. You who are trifling with this sin and that sin, and you know it – Oh, my friends, you know a thousand times better than I can tell you, what sins you have to contend with. There is only one way, and that is a total smash up of the thing that is tempting you.

I used to think a good deal of the opinions of people, and would ask this man. What do you think about dancing? and the other man. What do you think about so and so? Do you know, I have gotten completely over that? I would not give one fig – to use a common expression – for the opinion of any man on earth that does not try to live exactly right, for I have discovered that every man on earth is molding his opinions by his own sins. Live right. Serve God. Fight temptation. Take the old Adam and bury him. Remember your baptismal covenant. Remember that you are in Jesus Christ, and aim to live higher every day, and your opinion is worth something and until you reach that stage of life it isn't worth anything.

Men's opinions are not molded by brain; they are not molded by education as far as secular education is concerned; the only opinion worth anything is the one molded by the heart buried into Christ.

There is a beautiful chapter, I think the 47th of Ezekiel, in which the great prophet sees a little stream starting out from under the East gate and going out a thousand cubits; he tries to wade through and it is just ankle deep; he goes another thousand cubits and it is knee deep; another thousand cubits and the waters then reach up to the loins; another thousand cubits, he tries to wade in and cannot; it is a deep river, too wide for him to swim, too deep to wade, and so he comes back to his God, and finds out that there are trees on both sides of that river for the healing of all nations, and that this river is the river of life. It is a prophecy of Holy Baptism. Some people cannot see anything in baptism but just a little form and just a little water, and they say. Oh, that is only ankle deep. Then they begin to study the subject a little more, and they discover it reaches to their knees. Then they study it a little more, and they find it does reach to the loins. Then they go on and study it more and more, and they say, Oh, it is a deep river! I believe it was King Ludwig, of France, who said, "I believe three handfuls of water are worth more than all my kingdom" – referring to baptism. "For," said he, "my kingdom is only France, but when I was baptized with three handfuls of water, I received the kingdom of heaven!"

When Superintendent Weller got so despondent and so melancholy that all the pastors of the city could give him no comfort, they sent for Luther. Luther went to the superintendent and tried to comfort him with one verse after another, but the poor man lay there so despondent that like a worm in the dust he could not get any comfort. At last Dr. Luther said to him:

"Weller, I want you to stop this nonsense. Are you not baptized?" And in that moment, like a flash of lightning, Weller received light. Of course he is baptized, and baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, into Christ's death and resurrection; why should he be unhappy? why melancholy? Why not remember it is a good thing to be a child of God, and cheer up? There is a wonderful power in baptism. Consider your baptismal covenant. The more you think it over the more you will find that one of the greatest acts of God in the history of the world, after Jesus had died to save us, was to apply that redemption by the means of grace.

One great trouble in the present day is that many people know nothing about the means of grace. They want to build a house, but they do not want

to know anything about stone or lumber; they want to build a ship, but they do not want to know anything about the vessel; they want to cross the ocean, but do not want to know anything about the boat; they want to do things, but they want to do them their own way. God has His way to save souls, and His way is to give us the Word and the holy sacraments, and it is our duty to be true to them; and when in those holy sacraments He pours out a blessing, it is our duty to receive it. God help you not to serve sin, but the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Amen.

Prayer

Lord our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the message of the hour. We thank Thee for Thy wonderful grace and love that has saved us, saved us through the Lord Jesus Christ, buried us into His death and into His resurrection by holy baptism. O God, we thank Thee for that covenant which adopts us, and for the wonderful promise: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. If there is one in this house this evening, heavenly Father, not baptized, old or young, help that one to come to Thee this day yet. O Father in heaven, do Thou help that we may obey Thy command and accept Thy promise, and live in the great Gospel. Father in heaven, help us this day to sever our connection entirely with the old Adam, drown him completely, and try to live wholly and solely for Thy glory, and at last when our final hour has come, O Father in heaven, take us home to Thee, and on this journey do Thou help us constantly to pray Thy prayer which Thou hast taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

42. The Manner Of Men.

Seventh Sunday After Trinity.

I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. 6:19-23.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

WE SHOULD THANK OUR GOD for those people who have been so fortunate as to be Christians all their lives. Happy is he who was reared in a Christian family, baptized as soon as he was born, taught to pray when he first could say, "Abba" and never knew the day when he did not love his Lord and believe in his God. And yet, my friends, there are many people in this world who are good Christians, although not reared that way, and we ought to thank God doubly for those who were almost eternally lost and now are saved. The apostle Paul thanks God for something that might surprise some people. In the 17th verse he says: But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Paul was thankful for those people that always had been Christians from their infancy, but he was doubly thankful for those that had almost gone astray entirely, and then were brought back by the Gospel to their Savior Jesus Christ. My friends, the question this evening is not, What have you been? but, What are you? And while we should feel very thankful for those who have never made a mistake in life, we should

feel doubly thankful for those who did make a mistake and have been regained by the Master. I wish to dwell a few moments on the thought:

The Manner Of Men

I. The Infirmary Of The Flesh

“I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh.” As I look through this epistle I find that the manner of men is, first, to be servants; all men are servants. The lost are servants of Satan and the saved are servants of God. "For as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and unto iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. But now being free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. These words clearly show us that it is the manner of men to be servants.

1. Every Lost Man Serves Satan With His Whole Body

Every lost man is a servant of Satan, and he not only serves Satan, but he serves him with all his members. It is a hard thing for some men to understand that they not only sin when they are lost, but that they do nothing else but sin. There is one word that we use very frequently in our prayers, namely, we ask God to forgive us our shortcomings. What an apology for sin! Where do you read in the Word of God that men asked God to forgive their shortcomings? A sin is a sin and nothing else. When a man becomes a servant of the devil he serves him with all his members and does nothing else. You say, I cannot understand that? You cannot understand why an act is not good, no difference who does it? It is not my purpose to explain everything to you that Paul says, but it is enough for me to say. Thus saith the Lord. God tells us distinctly, Whatever is not of faith, is sin. Whatsoever covers everything, and when you have faith in God you are not lost, and when you have not faith in God, you are lost. And when you have no faith in God, no difference what you do, you are sinning, for you are robbing God of His glory, even when you think you are doing good; you

take the glory to yourself instead of giving it to the Master. It is absolutely impossible for a lost man to serve his God until he is saved.

Not only is it true that he serves the devil, but he serves him with every bone in his body, with every member of his body. The lost man serves the devil with his ears. He hears in order to serve the devil. He looks with his eyes and serves the devil with them. He serves the devil with his hands; he serves the devil with his feet; he serves the devil with every part of his body; every member.

“I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh; for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and iniquity unto iniquity.”

The real truth is there is nothing in this world so precious as seed. When you go to the harvest field it isn't the straw that is made precious, it is the wheat; and just so in the human race; it is not this or that member of the body that you see externally that is made precious. The subject is almost too delicate to mention in public, but the whole epistle of Paul dwells upon the fact, and I would not be His true servant if I did not say that those very parts of the body that are used for the multiplying of the human race, are the very ones that children of the devil are abusing and using for the service of Satan. Every member of the body a lost man is using as a servant of Satan; not only goes on and abuses those members himself, but tries his very best to teach others how to sin – servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity. As the first sin of Eve did not rest with her, but led Adam to sin, and then led her and Adam to sin through her children, and kept on multiplying until you and I tonight are suffering on account of the first sin in the world, so the lost soul is not satisfied to use every member serving Satan, but is trying to educate others. Do you know of a single lost man on earth who is keeping his sin all to himself? Even the most secret sins in the world are used to educate others. And thus the lost servant of the devil goes on out and becomes an instructor, and the sins multiply, not only in his own body, but they multiply in the bodies of others. The father plants his very sin into his children, and helps to teach others in the neighborhood to live as he lived. Every one of you sitting before me tonight is a teacher and you not only are teachers, but lost man, you are teaching everybody around you to be lost. If you are a lost father in the home, you are by your very life saying. My wife, you ought to be a lost woman; My children, you ought to walk in

my footsteps, for I am your father and teacher. You are saying to every neighbor that goes to church. You are a fool. You are saying to every man that loves his Bible, You are a fool. You are saying to every one who is trying to lead a righteous life. Why do you not do as I do? You are saying to every friend of yours. Follow me. Multiplying iniquity unto iniquity. Oh, the awfulness of serving Satan! And not only serving him with all your members, but all your powers.

All men are servants. A saved man is a servant of God. The apostle Paul is trying to show the Romans the importance of rendering to God as important a service now as they one time rendered to the devil. In other words, conversion means to turn around. Now, said he to the Romans, as you gave your feet and your hands and your whole body, every member, to serve Satan in the flesh; as you went on teaching others how to sin, now I ask you in the name of God to turn around and serve God. Even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness; for when ye were the servants of sin ye were free from righteousness. The argument is, when you were serving the devil, you didn't care at all to serve God; now since you have come to serve God, you must not care at all to serve the devil. As you served Satan before, you must now serve God. Instead of having those feet walk upon the paths that lead to death and destruction, bring those feet on the narrow path to heaven. Before this you used your hands to help Satan with his kingdom; now you are to toil with your hands for the glory of the Master. Before you used your brain, and tongue, your eyes and your ears to help along the things that were wrong; now use those members for right. As formerly you abused the very privileges that God gave you as a man or a woman, now I want you to bring into the world men of God, and those that shall work for the kingdom of heaven. In other words, turn around, a total servant of the Master as you once served the devil.

Not only are the servants of God to serve Him with all their members, but they are commanded to serve him with all their might. "Even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." As formerly you went from iniquity unto iniquity, now I want you to go from righteousness unto holiness, a step higher every day. In other words, Christianity is a growth. We frequently hear men say that on such and such a day they were converted instantaneously; before that they were children of the devil, and all at once became children of God, and so churches after

churches have been dumb enough to ask a man of this kind to get up and preach; and what nonsense they preached! A man does not come from a child of the devil in one moment, and be a full-grown Christian the next. I do not care whether a man is fifty years old or twenty-five, as soon as he becomes a child of God he is a babe, and it is necessary for that babe to grow. Paul says of old Christians that they are babes, and need milk, and when they have grown up he will give them meat. In order to preach the Gospel of Christ, Jesus took His disciples, who were men, and taught them three years, and even then they were not fitted to preach the Gospel until after Pentecost. In these days we think we are so smart that we can in a few weeks time be ministers of the Gospel. I say the Lord our God commands us now to pray and to serve Him with our members and with our might, just the same as we formerly were servants of Satan.

II. All Are Ashamed

A second thought that lies in the manner of men is that all are ashamed.

“What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.”

These men are now ashamed; formerly they were ashamed of something else. Every man on earth is ashamed of something. I do not know any better way to illustrate the shame of all men than simply to call attention to the little parable of the Prodigal Son. All manner of men are ashamed. The lost men are ashamed as the prodigal son when he came home. Let us look for a moment at the prodigal son. He had a beautiful home; a good father; a good and kind brother; plenty of money; everything that a young man could ask for. But all at once he felt ashamed of father, ashamed of his brother, ashamed to be called a farmer's son, and he asked his father to give him his own; and then he started away from home, and when he walked along down the highway and met young men and fell in with them; they said, “Do you belong up here on the farm?” “Oh, no; no, sir. I have left home for good.” They said, “Come on, let us have a good time,” and just as long as the young man had plenty of money he had plenty of company. You always find that where you have got money, you have got friends. It was not long

until they sought other company. They sought women who were not good Christian women, but the worst women they could find. And then those women said, “You belong up here in the country, do you?” “Oh, no, I have left home for good.” “I suppose you are one of those clod-hoppers who used to plow?” “No, sir; I am a gentleman, now. I have left home. I am ashamed of father and mother, and of brother, and of the whole home community. I have come down here to have a time.” And then they had a time. He was not ashamed of the life he was living, but when his money was all gone, his young friends said, “Now, goodbye! We are done with you.” And then he was still as hungry as he was before, satisfied, up at his father’s table. He went out and asked a farmer for work. He said, “Go over and herd those swine” – but he hadn’t anything to eat except the corn, and when the corn was thrown to the swine the poor hungry boy at last managed to get hold of an ear of corn. That prodigal son was ashamed of home – and there you have a picture of the lost man.

You ask a lost man to read his Bible and he is ashamed of that; ask him to lead in prayer, Oh! how he is ashamed of that. Ask him to have a good Christian home, – Oh, no. Ask him to go to church – Oh, no, he is ashamed of that. Ask him to worship Jesus Christ – Oh, no; he would rather curse in the name of Christ than pray in His name. Ask him to do anything good and holy, and he will look at you. He is ashamed of that. Ashamed of Jesus! Ashamed of the greatest character that ever was in the world or ever will come. Ashamed of the hands that did nothing but bless. Ashamed of the feet that walked in the paths of righteousness. Ashamed of the best things that are manly, for you must all admit that the Word of God is the best Book in the world. You must all admit that the man that will pray to God in heaven is manly. You must admit that the man that tries to educate his children aright at home is the right kind of a father. But the lost man is ashamed of everything that he ought not to be ashamed of, and is actually not ashamed of the very things he ought to be ashamed of; but he is ashamed, nevertheless.

How about the righteous man? How about the saved man? Is he ashamed of anything? Yes, he too, is ashamed. Let us go back to the prodigal son again. He came to himself. O God, that every man in Mansfield tonight might come to himself! There are hundreds and thousands that are going down the path to destruction that simply have not come to themselves. They never think. This poor man, when he tried to get an ear of corn away from

the swine, and it ran off, and he could not even have what the pigs at home had, came to himself. There is a time when the lost man will come to himself – if not in this world, on the judgment day. That rich man in hell came to himself. He said to Abraham: “Send Lazarus, that he tell my five brothers not to come into this place of torment,” but it was too late. The prodigal came to himself and then began to compare that home of the swine with the home of his father. He began to compare the farmer, that drove him to the swine feed, with his father, standing up on yonder hill, with a broken heart, looking for his son to come home. He began to compare this filth and dirt with the white table at home. He came to himself. And then he said to himself, “Now, I am thoroughly ashamed of myself; I am ashamed of the fact that I, who was born of a pure mother, lived with those filthy harlots; I am ashamed of myself, that I walked away from that dear home and from that elder brother; I am not fit to sleep in the same bed with him any more; not fit to dwell under the same roof any more; not fit to go home and touch my brother’s garments any more; I am a good-for-nothing man; I will go home, and I will say to father;” “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee!” And all this time the father was looking out for the son to come home; and when he saw him in the distance the father’s heart ran out; he did not give the boy time to say anything; he threw his loving arms around him and kissed him. Kill the fatted calf! Bring the ring! Call out the friends and let us eat and rejoice, for the lost is found! The lost is found! And from that day on this prodigal was ashamed – not ashamed of father any more; not ashamed of mother any more; not ashamed of home any more, but ashamed of himself, and ashamed of the life that he lived. Oh, that poor, broken-hearted boy! I can hear his brother saying to him after that, “Tell me all about your travels.” “Oh, brother, don’t say anything about it; I am ashamed of it.” I can hear his enemy say, “Aha! Where is your farm? Haven’t you got any? What kind of girls were those I saw you with?” “Oh, don’t mention it. I am ashamed! Oh, father, I don’t see what I meant to leave home as I did!” And as you sit before me tonight and remember the day when you were lost, remember what you did; how you went away from the Father; how, baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, you started away and said. Now then, I shall have a good time. Farewell, brother. Farewell, mother. Farewell, father; I am going to live a life of sin. But God, with His broken heart, was following you, threw His arms of love around you, and brought you back; pressed you to His bosom and forgave

you. And now some one says. Tell us all about it; and you will not do it, because you are ashamed of it. Oh, don't tell it! We don't want to know it. It is the manner of men. We have all got something to be ashamed of. The lost are ashamed of everything right and good. The saved are ashamed of everything they ever did that was wrong.

III. Men Reap

Notice, too, it is the manner of men to become reapers. "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." We are told in another place that there are only two ways. There is a narrow way that leads to heaven and a broad way that leads to destruction. There is a way for the lost and a way for the saved, and he that goes the way of the saved shall reap everlasting life; and he that goes the way of the lost must reap eternal death. And so you see we are going to become reapers, and there is no question at all about the fact that you are going to reap what you sow. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Oh, how strange it is that in this intelligent age, men with over forty ounces of brain imagine that they can sow hell all their lives and reap heaven! Men think they can sow a life of sin and come home to the Father; they have sense enough to know that when they plant cabbage in their gardens they don't expect flowers; they have sense enough to know that when they sow wheat on their farms they do not expect to reap corn; or that when they plant potatoes they don't expect to reap wheat; and they know that when they sow weeds, or sow nothing, they will reap weeds; but it does seem that in the moral field, thousands of people think they can serve the devil all their lives, and sow death and damnation everywhere, and in the end reap heaven. It is not so. There are many pulpits from which you never hear the word hell any more, although the Bible is full of it. Many ministers of the Gospel never warn their people at all any more. There are many so called wise men who scorn the idea of an eternal punishment, but if there is no hell, the Bible is the worst Book that ever came into the world; it is a Book full of lies, and it is time we are tearing our churches down, and stop

paying the ministers whose hearts are full of hypocrisy. I say to you, Thus saith the Lord, there is a short path to live, and on that path you are sowing either seeds of kindness and goodness, and holiness, and righteousness, or you are sowing death and destruction, and you are seven days nearer to the end of that path than you were last Sunday, and before another Sunday shall have come, some who are sitting before me tonight may reach the end; and when you reach the end of the lost, mark you! God does not damn a man, but He lets him have his wages – for the wages of sin is death; and just as sure as you are going on the path of the lost and will not come to the Savior and be saved, you will reap your harvest. Don't tell me that Christ will damn you on the Judgment day. He will not do it. The truth of God's Word is that unless you have been saved, you are lost. Christ did not come into the world to damn anybody. The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. You are lost until you are saved, and the question is, are you sowing on the field in which you were born, or are you sowing on the field in which you were regenerated? Have you been born again? Have you accepted Christ? Are you living in Him? Are you walking in Him? Are you serving Him?

On the other hand, if you are a true child of God, you are not going to get your wages; you are going to get something that no human work can ever earn. But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. The servant of hell works for wages, and gets them, and it is eternal death. The servant of God works in thanksgiving, and he receives the gift of eternal life, the gift of grace. Christ is the Savior of the world and all things His are ours; so that He is heir and we are joint-heirs with Christ.

In conclusion, I close as I began. The question tonight is not at all, what you have been? God knows we have all been mean enough. That is not the question. The question tonight is not. What have you done? We don't want to hear the story. God knows it. But there is a question tonight that we ought to answer. On what path are we now? Whom are we serving tonight? That sermon is not worth hearing that does not make every hearer determine to go out of the house of God to live a better life; and that sermon is not worth hearing that does not show a man that is lost how to be saved; and if these should be the last words that I ever speak, I would say, acknowledge yourself by nature a poor, lost, condemned sinner; accept Jesus Christ as the only Savior of the world; put your full trust in Him; be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; put on Christ; sow righteousness, and be

faithful until death, and receive the crown of eternal life. This is salvation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Thus saith the Lord. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we have learned tonight something of the manner of men. We have learned that all men are servants; that every lost man is a servant of Satan; that every saved man must be a servant of God. We have learned, heavenly Father, that every lost man serves Satan with all his members and all his powers. We have learned that every saved man should serve God with all his members and with all his powers. We have learned, heavenly Father, that all men are ashamed of something; that the lost are ashamed of the things that are good and holy; that the saved are ashamed of the bad lives they lived before they were saved. Father in heaven, we have learned that all are reapers, and the time is not far off for some of us to reap the harvest. O God, what have we sown today? We pray Thee to help us now to sow Thy truth into our own hearts and into the hearts of all who hear us, and may we live and so teach that every member from the crown of our heads to the souls of our feet shall be in the service of the Master, for His great glory; not for wages, but for the gift of eternal life. Hear this our prayer: We ask it in Jesus' name, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

43. The Spirit of Adoption. *Eighth Sunday After Trinity.*

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. Rom. 8:12-17.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THE GREAT GERMAN THEOLOGIAN AND WRITER, [Scriver](#), pronounced this chapter the golden chapter of the Bible. This chapter has made such a wonderful impression on some men that in Europe it is the custom before a man dies to read this chapter for the last one in his hearing before he passes into eternity. In this golden chapter, our text is the golden link that is most valuable. For the first time in this great letter to the Romans, we are called the sons of God, "not because we are debtors to the flesh, but because we are adopted by the Holy Spirit. In this chapter we are shown what it means to have peace with God, and what it means not to have condemnation resting upon us. Let me in all brevity this evening call your attention to:

The Spirit Of Adoption

- I. It is the Spirit of God.
- II. It should be the spirit of every Christian.

I. It Is The Spirit Of God

The spirit of adoption is the Spirit of God.

“For as many as are lead by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

The spirit of adoption then is, in the first place, the Spirit of God.

In order that I may make this lesson plain, let me remind you again of the fact that God has only one Son, and that one Son is Jesus Christ, the God-man, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Remember that you and I could never be called the sons of God were it not by adoption. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. It is well for us to keep this in mind, because many think that we are the sons of God because He created us. You are no more a son of God by creation than an ox or a sheep is. They, too, are created. Man is not the son of God by creation, but he is a son of God by adoption.

Another thought we must not forget in this connection is this, that the world has always been, from the day of sin to this time, full of orphans. In other words, the human race has by nature been a race of orphans. When Adam was created in the image of God he was His son; when Eve was created from the bosom of Adam, she was a real daughter of God. When these two parents sinned and their children were born, they were born orphans – spiritual orphans – and from that day to this, every man has been born in the likeness of his father, and consequently, is born in sin, and must be born again before he can see or enter the kingdom of heaven. If now you will picture the whole world before you as a world of orphans, and Jesus Christ the only Son of God, you will get a better idea of the text when Paul says that by this Spirit we are adopted as children of God.

It is the will of our heavenly Father, who has but one begotten Son, that all these orphans shall be adopted. It is not the will of God that any man should be lost. As I just quoted a moment ago, God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. And have you forgotten the parable

where He sent out the invitation in the morning, and at nine o'clock, and at noon, and at three o'clock, and the eleventh hour, that all might come? It is not the will of God that any man should perish.

When the Lord our God wishes to adopt children through the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Holy Spirit, the first thing He wants to do with these little children is to teach them to talk. "Whereby we cry, Abba, Father." That word Abba used to seem to me like children's play, and it is a beautiful childish word. It is the word that sounds much like the word you uttered when first you said papa, mamma; and did you ever stop to think that word Abba, can be pronounced long before the word father? But do you suppose you could say father without putting your tongue to your teeth? Try it once. How can a little babe say father, when it has no teeth? The Holy Spirit wants to take us, like a mother would take a little babe, and touch its lips, and say, Now speak; and unconsciously the first thing is said with the lips and not with the teeth, mamma – papa. And so the Holy Spirit says, I will adopt you, dear child, and I want you to begin to talk to Me, and talk to the Father, and talk to the Son; but we will not wait until you are old enough to put your tongue to your teeth, but begin moving your lips, and say, Abba; and when you have said Abba a while, then we will expect you to say, Father; and after you have said Father, then we want you to say. Our Father, who art in heaven. Oh, the beautiful teaching of the Holy Spirit when He adopts you! He does not expect you to be a deaf mute; He does not expect you to go through the world beginning by praying like an old saint, nor to keep your lips forever closed. A child of God must pray. It is the vital breath. You cannot live without breathing; you cannot live the spiritual life without at least beginning to move your lips and say Abba, if you cannot say Father.

And when the Holy Spirit has adopted you, and has taught you to say Abba, Father, then the next thing He does is to teach you how to walk. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Every man is led. Every man has his master. We often hear men proudly say, I am my own boss; but no man on earth is his own master. Every man on earth is serving God or Satan. Every man is paying a price to his master. I have heard men say, I would belong to the church of God, but I cannot afford it. The very men that cannot afford to pay to keep up the church of God, are the men spending hundreds of dollars every year for the devil and devilish things. No man on earth is his own. No man can get rid of the fact he has

got to be led. Who is your leader? The Holy Spirit the moment He adopts you, says, I will lead you, and when I lead you, I will lead you as a child of God. Have you ever seen a mother teach the little babe to walk, – how at first she takes the little babe and says. Stand up; and then the little child places its hands in mother’s hands, and she begins to pull her hands away from the child, and the little child follows, and takes its awkward first step. Then after a while it can walk a few steps alone, and mother will set it down again and walk away and say. Little darling, come to mamma, and the child starts and runs, and before it falls it reaches the mother’s hand again; and thus it keeps on, from the awkward step to the run, and it will not be long until it runs across the room itself, and the whole family is happy because the child can walk. A little while longer and it crawls down over the step, and in a little while you see it running around in the yard. It was led by the mother to walk, that it might be mother’s child. When the Holy Spirit takes us, when we are adopted, he says. Now that you can say Abba, and now that you can say Father, take My hand; ask yourself the question. Where do I want you to go; and I will lead you; I will lead you to the house of God; I will lead you to the Word of God; I will lead you to the closet of prayer; I will lead you to those who can teach you the way and make it clear to you; I will lead you to the Savior, Jesus Christ, and through Him I will lead you to the Father, and I will help you to walk; and after you can walk, then you must learn to bear your burden, and bear the burdens of others; and thus learn the truth, For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

He not only teaches His children to talk and to walk, but when He adopts us. He furthermore assures us that we are His. “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” Now and then we hear professed Christians say, I am not quite sure whether I am a Christian or not. What strange talk. Are you not sure whether your mother is your mother? Are you not sure whether your father is your father? I know there might be a few people in the world who are not exactly certain who their father is. Booker T. Washington does not know today who his father is, but Booker T. Washington is the exception. I will dare say every one in this house tonight knows positively who his father is and who his mother is, and why should you not know whether God is your Father or not? Why should you not know whether His Bride, the Bride of Christ, is your mother or not? Are you baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost? If so, do

you believe in God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost? If you do, listen: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Do you not know who your Father is? Do you not know who your mother is? He that is of God, heareth God's Words; ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God. Do you love to hear God's Word? If so, you are a child of God. Do you not care to hear God's Word? If not, you are not a child of God. Are you glad you are baptized? If so, you are a child of God. Do you wish you were not baptized? Then you are not a child of God. Do you love God's truth? If so, you are a child of God. Do you hate God's truth? If so, you are not a child of God. Do you love to keep a clean conscience? If so, you are a child of God. Do you fight against a clear conscience? If you do, you are not a child of God. Is it your purpose to be faithful until death and receive the crown of eternal life? Then you are a child of God. Do you not care whether you are faithful or not? Then you are not a child of God. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God. So you see the dear Father in heaven wants you to positively know that you are His.

When He adopts you, He not only takes you into His family and gives you bread to eat and clothing to wear, but He furthermore says, I want to make you an heir. "And if children, then heirs." The Apostle Paul goes link by link down the golden chain. He says, if God, our Father, adopts us by the Holy Spirit, that means that we should talk; and if we learn to talk to Him, we ought to learn to walk with Him; and if we walk with Him, we ought to be His; and if we are His, we ought to be heirs. In other words, if we are adopted children of God, then He has got something in store for us which we have not yet. There is a wonderful difference in the home between the son and the servant. They both may plow the same field; both may drive teams of horses, one just as much as the other; both may do the same kind of day's work; but when the year is up the servant receives his pay and goes away; the son may receive no money, and he may think it is better to be a servant than to be a son; but that son forgets one thing; that son forgets that when he is working for father and mother, he is working for himself; and when father dies and the will is read and he finds out there that the son who complained against the servant receiving his pay, now becomes an heir to the farm, he discovers what he did not know before, that when he worked for father he worked for father's son; when he worked for mother he

worked for mother's son; and now he is an heir, and there is a wonderful difference between being an heir and being a servant.

When we are adopted by the Holy Spirit we are to become heirs, and not only heirs, – but Oh, the wonderful love of God! – joint heirs with Jesus Christ. “And if children then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.” In other words, when we are adopted God does not say. Now I have one Son, and that one Son is to get nearly everything, and the rest I will divide among My adopted children. No, the wonderful love of God is this: He has but one Son, and that one Son is heir of all things, but that one Son so loved the world, that He gave Himself, His own life, that He might say to the poorest among you, I will adopt you; and every adopted son shall be a full brother in Jesus Christ, and every adopted daughter shall be a full sister in Jesus Christ; and the will of God now is that we shall all, who are adopted, be joint heirs with the only Son of God. That, my friends, is the Spirit of adoption.

II. It Should Be The Spirit Of Every Christian

This Spirit of adoption is not only the Spirit of God, but should be the spirit of the Christian.

“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

We have received that Spirit! Oh, what a wonderful Spirit that is, the Spirit of adoption! You will notice that I only asked you to sing the first three stanzas of Hymn No. 249. Right at this point I want you to sing the fourth stanza, – that is, you who want to be adopted as God's children and who want the Spirit of adoption: (Congregation sing.)

“To God I'm reconciled,
His pardoning voice I hear:
He owns me for His child,
I can no longer fear;
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And, 'Father, Abba Father!' cry,”

I take it for granted that all of you who sang this stanza would love to have the Spirit of adoption, and it is my purpose to show you this evening the wonderful difference between a professed Christianity and a true Christianity, as there is a wonderful difference between saying prayers and praying.

Now let me give you another picture of life. Look at the homes of our country. It is not my intention to make this a very popular sermon here on earth, but I do hope to make it extremely popular in heaven. What I have to say in the next few moments will strike at every home in this city, at every home, I believe, in the Christian world.

How many homes are there that have the Spirit of adoption? See the homes of our country that have absolutely no children in them. There may be many of these that would love to have children and cannot. Like Hannah of old, it may be that this very day their lips are moving for God to give them a Samuel. May God answer their prayers!

There are not only homes that have no children, but there are many that have only one and will have no more. May God have mercy on them! I know the sayings that go around among the people. Many a woman has said that if Pastor Long just had one child he wouldn't say anything more about it. They are the same women that never had any more than one child, that say these things. How many homes there are that have only one or two and will absolutely have no more. How many small homes there are these days, and how few there are that have the good old families that God asked for when He said. Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth! and He never revoked that command.

On the other hand, I wish to show you another picture. Look at the Childrens' Homes all over this country, and the Orphans' Homes. Where is the church today that has not got a home for little children who have no fathers nor mothers; and where is the county and the State in this Christian land that does not make provisions for these little infants? Look at the cost of maintaining these homes by fraternal orders and churches and states, and the most of people seem to think that when we have built a big house and placed a man and a woman there to feed and clothe these children, that we have done our duty fully. Thanks be to God for the orphans' homes of our land; but I am one of many others who believe that if the Christian church would do its full duty, there would be absolutely no need whatever for any childrens' homes or any orphans' homes in this wide land. I do not believe

that we as Christian people have the Spirit of adoption. I do not believe that we have received that Spirit of which God speaks in this verse: For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

Keeping in mind now the homes that have no children, or only a few; keeping in mind the many poor little orphans all over this world, let us notice that we as Christian people should ask ourselves the question. Are we willing to adopt any child into our home as God the Holy Spirit adopted us? Are we willing? Oh, it is a nice thing to sit down and sing as we sang that we are adopted, but are we willing to adopt? This sermon hits the preacher just as hard as it does the pew. If any people in the world ought to live right, it ought to be in the parsonage. Suppose, to make this sermon practical this evening – and a sermon that is not practical is not worth anything – suppose I should go out on the street today and find on some lonely step a child, as three children were found in the city of Columbus the past week, of which we do not know who is the mother or the father – suppose I should pick up that child and first of all walk right down to our own parsonage, in the presence of my wife and children and say: "Look here, I have found something. A little boy." "Who is the father?" "I don't know." "Who is the mother?" "I do not know. Let's adopt it." "What is the matter with you, papa? Haven't we got four children yet? Haven't we had six? And you bring in this child and want to adopt it?" "Well," I say, "Look here, my dear family, God has adopted us when we were orphans, and He gave us the Spirit of adoption, and I believe we ought to keep His children." "We cannot do it. We have got children enough of our own. Take it to one of the neighbors." Well, then, I would start out and go from one family to the other in the Church Council. I go to the first man and say, "I want you to take it." "Oh, we cannot take it." I would go to the next, "We don't want it." I would go on around. Then I would go to all the families of the church and say, "Here is a babe. I want you to take it." "We cannot do it." "What will we do with this little babe?" "Take it to the Orphans' Home!" Is that the Spirit of adoption?

But I am not done with that child yet. I come back home the second time and I say, "Look here. I have been to every family in the church and not one wants this babe. I have found out where it came from. It is born of the meanest, lowest woman in town, and it is begotten by the worst old drunkard in the world. The child is a badly born child, and I have made up

my mind that we had better adopt it.” “Oh, holy horrors! You don’t mean it?” “Why yes, I do. I mean here is a little babe that has to be cared for.” “But we have children.” “Well, God had a Son, too, and He adopted us. That was His Spirit. He had a Son, a dear Son, and He adopted us all, and we were pretty badly born, too.” “Well, but if this child had come from real good parents we wouldn’t object, but this little badly born babe, with a bad mother and a bad father, how can we have that in the house?” “That is just what God did when He adopted us. We were so badly born we weren’t fit to lie on the steps. He took us and adopted us. I guess we had better keep it.” I can hear the children say to mamma, “I believe papa has lost his mind; he is crazy!” I start out again to the Church Council and tell them about the babe. “Won’t you take it?” “No, sir! take it away.” I go through the whole church. Not one will take it.

Then I come home another time. I say, “This little babe has got to have a home, and that is not all. Dear wife and children, I have made up my mind that this little waif, badly born, has got to be brought into our home, and when I make my will, if I have a farm, it has to have its share; if any money in the bank, it must have its share.” The children say, “Take the baby away! We don’t want it!” And all the time this is the parsonage of the First Lutheran Church. It is just like every other parsonage over the city, and it is like the homes of our congregation. And so I go on. I find out if I want any peace in my own home, I have to walk out with the baby the third time and visit the Church Council and every family. They say, “We simply cannot have it, and we will not put anything in the will about it.” I go to every member of the church, and then to those members that have no children at all. “Oh, horrors! We don’t want that thing.” And we are the people who just sang the song about adoption. We are the people that have asked God to come and take us, take us, badly born as we are, take us and make us heirs and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, but we wouldn’t have the Spirit of adoption if God wanted to give it to us.

I am not preaching this sermon to you alone. I am convinced that we preachers and people have not got to the depth of God’s Word at all. I believe we are around on the surface of that Holy Word. I believe there are thousands of deep treasures in this Book we have never found yet, and if we had the Spirit of adoption as God wants us to have it, we would go out and say that just because this babe is badly born it needs a good home. In the name of common sense, is a babe badly born any better off in a bad home

than in a good one? That is the question. If we have received the Spirit of God, the Spirit of adoption, should we not have mercy on the poor, badly born little infants of this country, and put them in the best homes we can find and raise them for God's glory? My aim is to put you to thinking. Ask yourselves the question, after all are we not just playing hypocrite? Just along on the surface of God's eternal truth, and we cannot see the depth of it. We want the truth, and want to live up to it. What should we do if that babe were brought to our home and either had to be thrown out or adopted? What would you say if father and mother were to adopt another child to become heir with you in the distribution of gifts? How many Christians are there in the world? Am I a Christian? That is the question. Is the minister of the Gospel a Christian? That is the question. May God help us to give ourselves a very close searching of heart this afternoon. Go to the depth of God's Word and pray to God, Oh God, give us the Spirit of adoption. Amen.

Prayer

Lord, our heavenly Father, Thou hast a great Son, an only Son, Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world; and that Son so loved the world that He laid His life down that all the orphans might be adopted and become joint heirs with Him, and enjoy all His legacy forever and ever.

And, Father in heaven, it is Thy will that Thy Holy Spirit should give us, Thy children, the Spirit of adoption. O God, do Thou help us this evening to question ourselves very closely. Have we got that Spirit? Have we got that love for humanity that Thou hadst for us orphans? Are we as willing to make them heirs of what little we may possess, as we have been to become heirs of what Thy Son possessed. Lord God, we ask a special blessing this evening upon the newly born babes of our own church. Bless their dear mothers and fathers and the dear little children. We ask Thee to be with those families that have no children; we ask Thee to be with the small families; we ask Thee to be with the large families; and may we who have the larger families be just as willing as those who have the smaller, to have another added, even if it is by adoption, to become a joint heir, and to show that we are not selfish but unselfish. O God, help that soon dear children may come into every home where there is only one, and rob that one of that

selfishness which seems to feel that everything is mine – mine. We pray Thee that Thou wilt bless those families who have more children than one and where there are none, and help that there may come to those families those bright little faces that shall make the home heavenly. We ask Thee to be with us as a church and bless us and increase us in faith as well as in number, and may we, when our last hour comes, find ourselves heirs and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

44. Why So Many Fall. Ninth Sunday After Trinity.

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 1 Cor. 10:6-13.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THE WORLD IS FULL OF FALLEN PEOPLE. Who are they that fall? Do I mean the heathen? How can a heathen who never was a Christian, fall from grace? Those who fall from grace are not heathen, but children of God. We are told in the beginning of this chapter that those who were delivered from Egypt and crossed the Red Sea, were all baptized by that sea, not immersed, but saved by the dividing of the waters, walking across on dry land; saved by the hand of God that led them over. Possibly you will understand the whole story better if I give you the Word of God verbatim:

“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness.”

They fell. “Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.” Here is a story of six hundred thousand men who could bear arms, professed followers of the true and living God, who saw with their own eyes the mighty works of the almighty hand of God; who saw that wonderful cloud by day and fire by night; who were fed with manna which fell from heaven; and with all these manifestations of the presence of the true and living God, their bones were scattered over the desert, and only two of the whole number ever reached the promised land. My friends, these things were written for our warning, for our admonition, in order that we might not fall; and show us:

Why So Many Fail

May the Holy Spirit apply this sermon this evening to you individually. May you sit before me tonight as if you were the only person to whom I am speaking; and may I forget that I am a minister of the Gospel and not preach professionally, but may God help me to apply this sermon to my own soul.

I. They Do Not Try To Stand

Many people fall because they do not try to stand.

“Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written. The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.”

Those people knew the true and living God. God put them on their feet and said. Now stand; but they had not crossed the sea and gone very far until even within the sound of the thunderings of Sinai’s lightnings and storms, in sight of the giving of the law to Moses, they said to Aaron, Give us gods as we had in Egypt; and they made a golden calf and danced around the false god, instead of worshiping the true and living God. Why? Because they did not try to stand. It was not a question that day whether there is a true and living God or not; it was not a question that day at all whether these people had ever heard of the true and living God; it was not a question whether heathen fall; it was a question, will children of God stand, or will they not? and they said, No, we will not stand; we will dance around the golden calf

because we love it, as we learned back there in Egypt. In other words, some people love idolatry a great deal better than the true and living God. And so would I, if I wanted to sin. I cannot sin with the true and living God before me, because He has eyes that see, and He has ears that hear; but when I want to do wrong. Oh, how nice it is to have a god made of stone. You can take your hatchet and hit him on the head; he does not know it. When I want to sin, how fine it is to have some unknown god somewhere that never gave his people a Bible; that never knows anything of a Judgment.

And these very people who love idolatry better than the true and living God, are the very people who would rather sit down to a big feast and make a god of their bellies than to worship the true and living God. "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." How many professed Christians there are today who will go to any missionary society providing you have got something to eat; they will go to any missionary society providing there is something to drink; they will go to any church gathering providing you can play fool; but how many people are there who will go to the missionary society for the sole purpose of learning what God is doing to save the souls of the world? How many people are there who go for the sole purpose of opening their pocketbooks and giving money to send some man out to tell the poor lost world how to be saved? Why do men fall? Because it is natural for the natural man to love idolatry and to hate the truth. They do not try to stand.

This is not only true with regard to idolatry; it is just as true with regard to licentiousness. "Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand." Back in the garden of Eden when God made man. He wrote on his heart, Thou shalt not commit adultery. In order that the people might not forget it, God gave the law to Moses over on yonder burning mountain, and wrote with His own finger on tables of stone, Thou shalt not commit adultery. And the people down at the foot of the hill seemed to know what is coming. There was a reflection in their own hearts of what was going on on Mount Sinai, and they said. Come on, let us hurry up; the law is coming; let us have a grand old time before that time; and twenty-three thousand people committed fornication and were killed in a single day. Why? Because they did not want to stand. They did not try to stand. And why is it that so many professed Christians have the stain on their character that never can be blotted out, though God can forgive them? Because the only object they have in all the

world is just an opportunity, watching for a chance. The question with them is not at all, what is right or what is wrong; but, I would love to do wrong, where is the chance and I will do it; and they fall because they do not want to stand.

There is another very common sin among people that makes men fall, and that is a rebellion against God and against His servants. “Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.” You who are acquainted with Bible history know these old stories. You know how the people were not satisfied with the manna that fell from heaven, and how they murmured against God and against Moses, and the apostle tells the Corinthians they murmured against Christ. When Moses struck that Rock, the people supposed, this is just a stone, but it was a type of Christ. That cloud of the wilderness some thought was just smoke or a cloud, but we are told in the Word of God it was Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is not only two thousand years old; He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, yesterday, today, and forever; and as they did in the wilderness in those days, rebelled against Moses and rebelled against God, and were slain by the thousand, so that out of the six hundred thousand men, the very desert was covered with the bleached bones of the men that fell because they wanted to fall, only two of them ever reached the promised land.

Now, dear friends, let us not suppose in these days it is so much easier to be a Christian that it used to be. Hundreds of people in the Christian churches these days are living lives that they would not have pictured on the wall and have you to look at them for anything. How many of us would love to do that today? I ask the question, Why do so many people fall, and the first way that the devil wants people to fall is simply to get them into that mental condition that they do not care.

II. Those Who Think They Cannot Fall

Then there is a second reason for falling. The second class of people who fall so easily are those who think they must stand.

“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

The Apostle Paul recognized the fact that some people in the world think they must stand.

There are certain classes of people who look back over their lives and make comparisons between themselves and others, and they cannot see that they have ever fallen like some people have, and consequently they draw the conclusion, I never can fall; I must stand. Then again sometimes they have no sympathy whatever for those who have fallen; and then, in the third place, they draw the conclusion that just because they never have fallen, they can take part in certain questionable things that others cannot, because they must stand.

Beware of the man that grows proud in his spirit and thinks, I never fell and consequently never will fall. Did you ever stop to ask the question what would have become of you if you had been reared as some people have been; if you had been thrown out into the world as some people have been thrown out? It is well enough for you and me to boast that we never fell, when we had parents who watched us day and night until we were fifteen years old, and prayed with us every day, and threw their arms of love around us, and had our conscience brightened by sending us to the pastor and having us thoroughly catechized and instructed until our consciences were burning as bright as the fires of Sinai. It is well enough for you and me to boast that we never fell when we were put out into the very best families that could be found with a warning to those who were watching us to report at home how the boy is behaving. It is well enough for you and me to boast that we never fell when many a time we would have fallen if we had only had the opportunity; but God was careful to watch over us and protect us. It is easy enough for us to boast that we never fell when we are so homely that nobody in the world would look at us. It is easy enough for us to boast that we never fell when no one ever tried to make us fall. My dear friends, let us not boast. There are thousands of ways and traps for us to fall, and let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. No sympathy for the fallen. You think because David fell he was a weak man? There is not a stronger man in the world today than David was. Because the Apostle Peter denied his Master, you say weak Peter. There isn't one man out of ten thousand that would not have denied his Master under the same circumstances. You

say fallen Judas, but, my friends, many a man today would be a Judas if he had the opportunity. Be careful that you do not lose sympathy for those that have fallen.

Here is a young man with money in his pocket; no father or mother who are Christians; thrown out into the world at the age of sixteen or eighteen; gone from the innocent country – and sometimes the country is not so innocent – to the city; falls into bad company. A homesick boy will make company with a dog; he will take up with any man; he will take up company with any woman. My dear friends, that young man thrown out into the world as I have described, with lust burning with strong physical development, unless the mighty grace of God throws its arm around him, will fall. Your daughter, left without a mother's care, going away from home, treated illy by those that ought to lift her up, lonely and lonesome, looking for company, wanting some kind word somewhere, will take up with the first man she sees in some way or other, and the more God has blessed her, the more Satan will try to overthrow her. Don't boast, my dear friends. When you think you are standing you will fall.

And especially is this true when we once get the notion in our heads that we have stood so long that now we are safe, and we can do what others cannot do. Did you ever try to picture your whole life in someone else? The devil always makes us believe that whatever we do is right; that we are justified because it is *we*; he always makes us believe that we have certain environments and certain circumstances that makes it all right in our case. Oh, if we could just see ourselves, as we would see others doing the same thing! My duty as a pastor and a minister of the Gospel is always to ask myself this question: What would I think of every minister of the Gospel in this world, if he did just exactly as I am doing? That is the only way I can see myself as I ought; and the only way you can see yourself as you ought, is just to ask yourself the question. Now then if my brother, my neighbor, would do just exactly as I am doing, what would I think of him? The man that thinks he must stand is the man that gets the false idea that he can do what others cannot do and stand. Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. My dear friends, if over five hundred and ninety-nine thousand people fell of the Israelites, there may a couple of hundred fall in this audience. Beware that you do not think you are standing and cannot fall.

III. Those Who Think They Cannot Stand

There is still a third class. There are many who fall because they think they cannot stand.

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

Those that think they cannot stand are the ones who think that they have temptations such as the world has never had. How often a man thinks, Now my temptation is an unusual one; there never was a man in all the world tempted as I am; and, going on that conclusion he says, well, I must fall. Paul writes down a sentence I wish you could all write down in your hearts and keep forever. “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man.” Your temptation is mine, and mine is yours. We all have the same temptations, if not just of the same character, they are equal in their downing power.

The next mistake we make sometimes is this, that we think our temptations have absolutely no limit, and that God is not helping us. Have you ever felt that way, that your temptation has got such control now that surely God has forsaken you, and it is impossible to try any more, I must yield? Paul writes again on your memory, never to forget it: “God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.” God never tempted you any more than you needed. If you are a mechanic and have made a machine of any kind, when it is done you test it, and if it isn’t worth testing, it isn’t worth having. When God in His love allows you to be tried and tested, and then you say, I cannot stand it, you are a worthless machine; you are not fit to live in this world. That is why so many people fall; they will not try to stand the test; they think they cannot, and consequently they think there is no use trying to escape. They think, what is the use? God gave me certain desires and I will fulfill them; if I have got a weakness it is not my fault; it is inherited; I will go and satisfy it; there is no use trying; I will fall anyway, and so I will fall; I cannot stand. Paul says. Don’t argue that way; that is the devil’s argument. This same God who is faithful will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Good news! a way to escape! and God will show you how.

Now, my dear friends, in conclusion, let me see if I cannot show my soul and your soul how to escape in times of temptation.

One of the very first things we must recognize in this world is this, that the greatest blessings lie right close to the greatest temptations. Show me a Savior and I will show you a Satan tempting Him. Show me a Christ going over the Holy Land preaching the Gospel of salvation, and I will show you by His side the devil possessing men, women and children. Show me a great blessing in yourself and I will show you a great temptation right by the side of it. And that is why so many Christians fall. They think, well now, I am regenerated; I am a new creature, a child of God, and consequently there is no danger; I will not fall; I will stand. My dear friend, if you were not a child of God, what would be the use of the devil throwing you down? Just because you are a child of God comes the wrestle, and if nearly six hundred thousand men were overthrown in the wilderness, and that was an example for you, then, my dear friends, remember that your great blessings lie right close to the greatest temptations.

Let me illustrate what I mean: Over in Allen County a few years ago, I took dinner with a man. He sat by my side, and he said, "There is one thing in the world that I never allow myself to do, and I have never had any temptation to do if I said," "What is it?" He said, "I never dance; I never care anything about it." Then I looked at the man, and I saw he was not able to walk, because he was a cripple. I thought, Poor man, you could not dance if you wanted to. And I thought to myself, if you were as nimble as I am, and enjoyed music as I do, and could hardly keep quiet when you hear music, you would say you have had the temptation to dance. I would rather dance than eat. Why? Because I love it. The blessing of a strong body, physically developed, and every nerve a string, will dance in the dark, if you give it a chance.

A lady said to me one day, "I have got no use at all for that Miss So-and-so; she has made a woeful mistake in life and she had no business to fall; I would not have fallen as she did." Then I looked at her old homely face and I said, "Well, you have got a reason for not falling; no man ever looked at you." She could not help it. I am not finding fault with her face. Oh, what a blessing it would have been for many a woman if she had had a homely face! but don't tell me that a woman with a homely face and a bad physical development has got the same battle in life that another one has, the pride of the city. Close to her blessings in life lie the greatest temptations. And

unless we recognize these facts that I am giving you this evening, we will fall.

The way to escape is to recognize that the greater the temptation is, the greater the blessing must be. Satan's masterpiece means Christ by his side. A strong blow to knock a man down by Satan, means a mighty soldier of God if he does not fall. And that is the first step to escape temptation.

Another way of escape is to pray without ceasing. An Indian who one time received a large package of tobacco, after opening it found some money, and began to debate. Shall I keep the money or shall I not? And finally he made up his mind that he would take the tobacco back to the owner and give the money back to him. When he came the owner said to the Indian, "What made you bring the money back?" "Why," said he, "I have got two men in me; when I first found the money, the one man said. Keep it; then the other man said. You have no right to it; and they began to fight, and they fought day and night, and," he said, "one day I just settled the quarrel; I said, Here, you two men; I am going to take that money back; and they quit fighting." That was the way the Indian told the story that I want to tell you now. There is a God in heaven who has planted a conscience in our hearts and souls and that God has said. Pray without ceasing; and He has taught us to say. Lead us, not into temptation. And do you ask why so many people fall? Because they go into dangerous places and say. Lead me not into temptation. Their prayer is. Lead me not; let me go. The Christian prays. Lead me, not into temptation. Do you see the difference? And then the child of God that wants to escape doesn't pray in the morning. Lead me, not into temptation, and in the afternoon plunge into it. A man can pray right up to the point, within two minutes of the instant he falls. The mistake we make is that we do not pray when we are falling.

A third way to escape is for us to remember that the opportunities for doing good are a thousand times greater than the opportunities for doing evil. Why do men fall? Because they are making opportunities to fall. And when you find yourself laying a plan that means an opportunity to sin, right there is your chance to escape. Cut off the opportunity. It is a great deal easier to preach than to practice. We sometimes imagine that the places to do good in the world are only a few, and the chances to do evil are so many. It is not true. The devil has blinded us. The fact is, it is terribly hard to find a place to sin. It is terribly hard to sin. Oh, what a battle people will make to sin; and yet it may be that you can only find half a dozen places in the

world that you can sin the sin that you want to sin, while you can find ten thousand times ten thousand places to do good. There is no other thing in all the world that is driving so many people to destruction as this notion of having our boys and girls these days do nothing until they are through High School. If our boys and girls were compelled to work hard, not only work, but work until they are so tired in the evening they would go to bed to sleep instead of running around over the streets at night and planning means to destroy others, our characters would be far better established. Then, my friends, make yourselves a thousand opportunities to do good, and cut off the opportunities to do evil, and God has made a way for you to escape.

And then let us not forget the history of the past. Our text tells us that this story of the Israelites is given us in the Bible as a warning, as an admonition, to us who are living in the last days of the world. My friends, have you not seen enough of what it means to fall, to waken up? If six hundred thousand men, with the exception of two, fell, isn't it time that you and I are waking up? Little does the devil care if I preach the Gospel for fifty years if in the end he can make all those whom I led to Christ say, he fell. The victory is then for hell. Let me urge upon you this morning to notice that David did fall, that Peter did fall, that Judas did fall, and that your own relatives did fall, and unless you watch out you will fall.

The last way of escape that I will give you this evening is to keep in mind day and night, Christ and Him crucified. You do not generally find that people sin very much around a corpse in the house; you do not find that they sin very much in a hospital where they hear the moaning and the groaning and suffering; and if you will remember Jesus on the cross crying out, "My God! My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" and remember that He is doing this for the fallen that they might stand and not fall; Oh, my friends, if you will make up your minds to do what sinning you do up on Calvary's hill, under the bleeding gore of your Savior; if you will keep before your eyes day and night Jesus dying for the very sins you are thinking of committing, the way to escape the temptation will appear and you will be free.

May God bless these words this evening to our souls' eternal good. May He help us to grow in grace, and to pray as we never did pray before, for purity of heart, for purity of life, that we may spend eternity in the presence of those who knew they could not stand by their own power, and knew that they could not fall when they held tightly to the hand of Jesus. Amen.

Prayer

Lord our God, we thank Thee for the plain message of the evening, and we do thank Thee that we know we physically stand before Thee now, but that Thou hast given us a message which will help us to stand spiritually to the end of life if we will listen to this voice and obey it. O God, do Thou bless this congregation, and all our congregations. Give us faithful pastors, fearless pastors. Give us men of God who proclaim the truth as it is in Thy Word. We ask Thee to go with us through this night. Bless us in our going out and coming in. Feed our souls on the bread of life, and O God, help that all of us may reach the Canaan of eternal rest; and on our way let us pray as Thou hast taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

45. Inexcusable Ignorance.

Tenth Sunday After Trinity.

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. 1 Cor. 12:1-11.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Dearly Beloved:

THE CORINTHIANS were not an ignorant people, but noted for their intelligence. Paul says in the beginning of this letter:

“I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ, that in everything ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift.”

But, like many intelligent people, they were full of contentions. They depended so much on their natural gifts that they hindered their spiritual growth. They went to church more to hear an eloquent preacher than to serve Christ. They made a human feast of the Holy Supper. They were inexcusably ignorant with all their natural gifts. Paul insists upon a better state of conditions in the church. The first verse is the trumpet sound for

liberty: “I would not have you ignorant.” Again he says: “I give you to understand.” He knows that they should and could know better – that they are guilty of:

Inexcusable Ignorance

I. It Is Inexcusable Ignorance Not To Know One’s Self

Adam and Eve were created in God’s image and were good and holy. Satan, that proud angel, rebelled against God, and caused our first parents to sin, and that sin caused spiritual death, and the wages of that sin was bodily death, and ever since this world has been a double graveyard – death for the soul and death for the body. There is no excuse for any one to be ignorant of this truth in a land of Bibles and Christian churches.

Nor is there any excuse for our not knowing that our forefathers were heathen. “Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.” These Corinthians knew that Paul had first preached the Gospel in Europe, and that Lydia was the first Christian, and that Macedonia had sent the missionary to them to preach Christ crucified to them. They could point to the false gods all around them which they themselves had worshiped. They could point to living parents and friends who carried and led them to idol worship. They had just come from the blackness of darkness to the brightness of light – the Light of the world. There was absolutely no excuse for them not to know what their fathers were, and there is no excuse for us not to know who our forefathers were. There are historical marks all over Europe today where our forefathers worshiped idols, and there are rocks and knives of stone to show where and how they cut off human heads to appease their gods. Had it not been for the missionaries who came to our forefathers with the Gospel, we would all be heathen today – possibly offered already as a sacrifice to some unknown god.

Know thyself. Know that you were born of sinful flesh. “That which is born of flesh is flesh,” said Jesus. We may not like to hear it, but we are all born heathen. “Ye must be born again.” Jesus knows us. Read the third chapter of John and know yourselves.

II. It Is Inexcusable Ignorance Not To Know Who The True And Living God Is

In the next place it is inexcusable ignorance not to know who the true and living God is. God hath given us brain to think. A thinker knows that God could make Himself known. The book of nature tells us plainly that God is almighty, wise, and good. Creation forces us to acknowledge a Creator. The maker is always greater than the thing made. Knabenshue has just sailed around the capitol of this state with his airship. The air-ship was in the mind of Knabenshue before it sailed in the air. The inventor is greater than the invention. Thus God, the Creator, is greater than creation, and we know that He could make Himself known. And just because He could, God would make Himself known. It was absolutely necessary for the King of kings and the Lord of lords to make Himself known to His subjects. Creation demands a Revelation.

This leads me now to the third link of the chain of a sane mind: God has made Himself known. "Wherefore I give you to understand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." The born heathen does not make himself a Christian. The true and living God revealed Himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost in His Word. We find Him in the first two verses of the Bible. God, the Elohim, Hebrew plural form of God, made the heavens and the earth, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. This Triune God said: Let us make man in our image. The angels praised this Triune God by singing three times: Holy, holy, holy. Aaron was commanded to say Lord three times in pronouncing the blessing. We were baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. We have just confessed our faith in Him; and when we were confirmed we vowed to be faithful

to Him till death. It would seem from all this that there ought to be no question in this enlightened age about who God is, and yet there are Christians, yea, even ministers of the Gospel, who are uniting in worship with Jews and Gentiles, who ignorantly deny our Savior and simply acknowledge what every Hottentot knows, that there is a Supreme Being. Satan never denied that there is a Supreme Being. Such ignorance among a so called Christian people is inexcusable in this enlightened age. Christians

should surely know the true and living God and take no part in devil-worship.

III. It Is Inexcusable Ignorance Not To Know The True Source Of All Spiritual Gifts

This leads me to say that it is inexcusable ignorance not to know the true source of all spiritual gifts.

“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.”

And what was the ignorance of those Corinthians? They did not seem to know that spiritual gifts were the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They did not seem to know that the Holy Spirit divided His gifts, and they did not seem to know that God operates His gifts in man.

We cannot be Christians unless we cling to Christ and accept Him as our Savior and Lord; but this we cannot do except by the Holy Spirit. We can say Jesus, as the ungodly do, by the power of Satan, but we cannot “say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.” When Jesus is our Lord then we are His subjects and obey Him. The gift to believe in Jesus belongs to the Holy Spirit.

“I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him, but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.”

– LUTHER’S CATECHISM.

It is inexcusable ignorance to think that any one of us possesses all of the Holy Spirit’s gifts. To one is given special wisdom in spiritual matters. To one is given special knowledge of His Word. To another is given a heroic faith to do what others would consider impossible. To another is given a special power to direct all the sick to God as the healer. To another is given a special gift to translate the Bible into many languages, but when the Holy Spirit divides these gifts among His children, He does not let go of them – they are still His.

He keeps His hand on His gifts in man. We may die but His gifts live on. We are to use His gifts, but He uses us to operate them. We must remain humble and give Him all the glory. Let me repeat the last sentence, for it is the key to this text. We must remain humble and give God all the glory. “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God .which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; lo another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.” Amen.

46. Born Out Of Due Time.

Eleventh Sunday After Trinity.

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that He was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God. I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 1 Cor. 15:1-10.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

WE HAVE JUST HEARD the Gospel of the day, how two men went into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee thanked God that he was so much better than his fellowmen, so much better than the publican. The publican would not look up as the Pharisee did; he did not strike at others as the Pharisee did, but struck at his own breast, at his own heart, at the seat of sin, and cried out in all humility, God be merciful to me a sinner! In harmony with that publican in the epistle for this day we find Paul the publican, – not proud Saul riding into Damascus, but humble Paul, feeling the terrible sin of persecuting the church of God, feeling that he has wasted so many years of his life, and that God in His mercy has saved him as by a miracle from heaven, he cries out, with the same spirit of the publican of old: O God, be merciful to me, a spiritual

bastard – born out of due time! “And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.” May the Holy Spirit bless us in this hour, while we are noticing many who are:

Born Out Of Due Time

I. Infants

There are infants that are not born again and surely when they become children of God they are born out of due time. The new birth is a necessity, says Christ, to enter the kingdom of heaven. Every one must be born again. From these words we learn clearly that every child must be born again before it can enter heaven. The new birth is therefore not only a possibility in infancy but a necessity. If that child is to be saved, it must be born again. These are the words of Jesus Christ. Nowhere has He said that a child will be lost, and no church has ever taught it, but the Word of God does clearly teach that the child must be born again before it can enter heaven. And if this is true, as it is, then, my friends, the little child that is not given to the Lord, is born out of due time.

The little infant that is not born again is harmed; it is a detriment to the parents and to the kingdom of God. It is a harm to the infant itself not to have it baptized, for Jesus said: Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven; showing us clearly not only the necessity of the new birth, but God’s plan by which we shall have it born again. Now then, if the new birth is possible for the infant, and it is necessary in order to enter heaven, then let me ask you whether it is not harmful to that child to let it lie in your cradle unbaptized?

Isn’t it a harm to let that child remain in its natural state? When we are by nature the children of wrath, what can we expect of these little children if we never have them brought to the Savior?

And not only is it a harm to the child itself, but it is a detriment to the parents. Parents should know that they have a responsibility resting upon them. The moment a little child is born into that family they should know that that little child is either born to give them great joy or great trouble. If it is possible to bring that child to the Lord Jesus to have it born again in due

time, then by what right should we wait and have the natural heart develop to cause trouble in the future? I am not here to say that every baptized child will ever be a good Christian, but I am here to say that if a little infant brought to the Savior by Holy Baptism and trained in the nurture and admonition of the Lord turns out badly, it would have turned out worse yet if it had not been brought to the Savior; and consequently you are only heaping up trials and troubles for yourself if you let that child grow up in its natural state, which means enmity to God and enmity to His holy laws.

It means a detriment to the kingdom of heaven. If there is anything plainly taught in the Bible it is this, that the Gospel should first be preached in Jerusalem and then to the ends of the world; that the Gospel should first be preached to the parents, and they are to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. If there is anything plainly taught by our Savior before He ascended to heaven, it is this, that this Gospel which Paul preached at Corinth should be preached to the ends of the world, and that all the nations should hear of Jesus that they might be saved. Now, if Christian parents are not going to rear Christian children, pray tell me, how shall the world ever be won for Christ? Look around in the churches of this country and you will find many a father and many a mother giving of their hard-earned money for foreign missions, singing about Christ for the world, telling of the wonderful things that should be done for the heathen, and when you come right down to the truth, they are rearing heathen at their own tables; they are making beds for heathen in their own homes; they are absolutely refusing to carry out the command of God that these little children should be brought to Him and trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Is it any wonder the kingdom of heaven is suffering on earth with boys and girls in Christian homes unbaptized; with children in Christian homes not instructed; with children growing up worse than heathen – because the poor heathen would accept Christ if they were given an opportunity, but in our Christian land we are rearing heathen by the thousands. Oh, the kingdom of heaven is suffering because of the fact that so many infants are not born again!

II. Those Born Again But Not Instructed in God's Word

Again, some are born out of due time when they are born again but not instructed in God's Word. Remember that the new birth is the beginning of the Christian life. If I were to ask you today what you know about your birth, you would have to depend almost entirely upon the testimony of your parents and a few of your friends; you remember nothing about it. The new birth is not experimental religion; the new birth is the seed of life sown into your heart that springs up, and, nurtured, makes you a full grown Christian. How many people there are that are brought to the Savior in infancy and dedicated to Him in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; then the little child is taken home and that is the end of it. The Bible forever remains a sealed Book to them; the catechism is to them a sealed book; they have nothing to remember, for they never received anything. And so, my friends, they are born out of due time.

The apostle Paul calls attention to the fact that the Word of God is the established guide in life: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." Again he says: "And that He was buried, and that He arose again the third day according to the Scriptures." Twice in that little epistle Paul calls attention to the Old Testament, for remember the New Testament was not yet written. This epistle to the Corinthians was one of the first writings of the New Testament. The two epistles to the Thessalonians were the very first; the next to the Corinthians. This epistle was written before Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, or any part except those mentioned. When Paul therefore speaks of the Scriptures, he means the Old Testament; and he calls attention to the great truth that Jesus Christ died according to the Old Testament and rose again according to the Old Testament. How many people there were in those days as there are today who do not know what is in the more complete Bible, the Old and the New. When people are simply brought to the Savior and baptized and never instructed any further, this Book is a sealed Book, for they know not what the Old Testament says about the death of Christ; they know not what it says about His resurrection; they know neither what the prophets said, nor what the evangelists proclaimed, nor what Paul wrote in his great epistles. If you do not know what is in God's Book you are born too late; you are born out of due time.

Not only should the Bible be an open Book to us, but the holy catechism, which is the little Bible taken out of the big Bible, should be an open book. When Paul says here: "Christ died for our sins that He was buried, and

that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,” we almost hear him repeating the Apostles’ Creed. In all of these epistles Paul warns the people not to forget the doctrines which he taught them:

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel, which I have preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.”

He shows them very clearly that they were not ignorant; that he had taught them to know God’s Word. There was a time when they were well catechized, and the warning is, be careful that you do not forget what you once had in your memory. And so, dear friends, there are many people in the present day yet that have been born again, but they have never been nurtured. If your little child is born healthy and well, and you do not take care of that child it will die; it needs nourishing day by day, and a father’s and a mother’s care. And just so a true Christian must not only be brought to the Savior and have the seed of eternal life planted into its heart by the Holy Spirit, and must be taught in the truth as we confess in the Word of God and in the catechism taken therefrom. It should know the difference between the law and the Gospel; it should know what the Gospel is, that it is the glad tidings that Jesus Christ has come into the world to save sinners; it should know that Jesus Christ is our Savior and through Him we have eternal life, and Him only. Take the false doctrines of the world; they do not cling to any person; they are simply cold statements; but the religion of Jesus Christ cannot stand one moment without Jesus Christ Himself. Take Jesus Christ out of Christianity and there is no Christianity left. We cling not to things, but a person, that same person is the Lord Jesus Christ, yesterday, today and forever. The Gospel therefore clings to a living Savior, not a dead one; a Savior that is present here, not over beyond the waters; a Savior that is in our hearts, and not one that dwells up on the right hand of God and there only. “Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world!” If we do not have that personal Savior with us in this life; if we do not have the catechism an open book like the Bible, then we are born out of due time.

I would go on just one step further and say, If we have not got the Gospel, how can we keep it? “By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.”

Suppose I were to ask you today to give me one hundred Bible passages that you committed when a child, could you do it? It may be that a few of you could; it may be there are many of you that cannot give me one promise readily without going to the Bible; that you cannot give me one word of comfort unless you have the book to read. It may be that your mind is filled with a thousand facts concerning this world, but not with a single fact concerning eternity. Brethren, let us beware that we do not live in this world born out of due time. Let not our minds become a blank without the Word of God written thereon. We are the living epistles of the Master.

III. Those Who Want To Be Born Again Just Before They Die

Then there is a third class born out of due time. Those that want to be born again just before they die. There are many people who do not want to live Christians, and they do not want to die children of the devil. Their whole plan is to serve the devil just as much as they dare until the hour that they must be saved if they are ever going to be; and it does seem to me that when people are brought to the Savior in their last years and their last hours, they must certainly have a regret that goes with them into eternity; and therefore if the apostle Paul who was converted in his later age, felt that he was born out of due time, surely every one who becomes a Christian in the last days of his life, must feel intensely the fact that he was born a little too late, born out of the regular time in which God intended him to be born.

And how is it about these late conversions? Thank God that there are late conversions! Thank God that those who have not attended to these things in time, have yet time in the last hour! But let us ask the question, what is the rule with regard to those who come to Christ in their last days? Many of them have no time any more to show their humility. Paul was a very humble man, and said to his people, "I am the least of the apostles." Dear friends, would you say so? Compare Paul, the great missionary, with all the others; would you say he is the least? No, I fear you would say just the opposite. Paul, you are greater than John, greater than Peter, greater than Luke, greater than all of them. But only a few born out of due time will ever acknowledge: I am not worthy to be called a child of God.

Those that are born out of due time, in the last hour, are also those who rarely know how much harm they have done. Paul seemed to realize it. "I persecuted the church of God!" That was one thing that Paul could never forget. God in his mercy saved him, and he never forgot the mighty grace of God that did save him, but he never could get rid of this one thought: Oh, the harm that I have done! The harm, the harm, the harm that I have done to my beloved Lord! to my dear Savior! I fought against the most loving Master there ever was – my Church that loved me so dearly; I struck her in the face. I was full of wrath and determined to put the children of God in prison! Oh, how it hurts me to think how I wandered away from my true and living God! How I struck at His beloved Bride! Oh, that I could undo my life! Oh, that I hadn't persecuted the Church of God, helping the devil, and the world, and the flesh! And now I am an apostle of Jesus! If I could only live my life over again! I am born out of due time.

Oh, how many are sitting before me this evening who must feel what Paul did. The harm that I have done with my careless, reckless life. Not only sinned myself but taught others to sin. Not only went to the gates of hell myself, but coaxed others to go with me.

The apostle Paul goes one step further, and makes up his mind he is going to redeem the time as much as possible. But how many are there that do try to redeem the time? How many are there that put on Christ in their old age and make up their minds. Now I am going to serve my God, do better, and try and make up the lost time? How often we find people in their old age coming into the kingdom of heaven, and that is the last you ever hear or see of them. They fear to testify; they fear to go out and try to do something in their last days. Now then, if we are not born too late we ought to go to work as we never did before, and try in a measure to undo something of the wickedness we have done. The apostle Paul, recognizing that he had persecuted the church, makes up his mind, I have no time to lose; "But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all; and yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

I can see the apostle Paul on the day he was converted thinking about the past, and thinking about the future; I can see him as he looks back and says, Well, I have had quite a vacation in my life; I have been out of my church all these years, opposing the Christ who called to me from heaven; I have been serving the devil and the world ignorantly; I have been going on the

path of wrong; and here my life is largely spent; but by the grace of God I will take no vacation now any more. I was not as great a man as John was. I did not fight for Christ as Peter did; I have not been with Him like Luke the physician; but I am going to do something that Luke, and John, and Peter and all of them together could not do. My years are few, but I am determined by the grace of God, with His help, to do more in the balance of my life than all the others could put together. I am not going to do it for my own glory; I am not going to do it by my power; but with power from on high, I shall now work as a man who realizes the wrong he did and the good that must be done, and must be done in a hurry. I will labor more abundantly than all of them put together, God helping me. Oh, that I could live my life over again! But it is gone – it is gone forever. The present is mine. O God, help me now to work! No vacation till I die! I hear one say, Paul, have you time to take a walk? No. Have you time to take a journey here? No. Have you time for a day's pleasure? No. Paul, what is the matter? I will tell you what is the matter, but you have got to walk along with me while I tell you; I have no time to stop. I have misspent so much of my life; I regret the fact so much, that by Thy help, O God, I am going to save souls day and night. Tell me to keep this tongue quiet? Not until the knife falls and severs my head from my body. Tell me I shall write no more? Let the chains clank on my arms; I am going to write until I die; I am going to make up lost time. My life has been a failure so far, but it shall not be a failure. God shall know and the world shall know that from the time I became a child of God, I gave my body and soul into the hands of the Master to work, work, work until I die, all out of pure thanksgiving for the mercy of God who had mercy upon me, Paul the publican. Amen.

Prayer

O, our Father in heaven, do Thou help us to realize in this evening hour what it means to be born out of due time. O God, Thou knowest how many there are in the world who have gone astray, who never would have gone astray if they had been born again in time. O God, do Thou help those who are present tonight and have little children, to realize their responsibility to bring those infants to Thee in time, not too late, and train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. O Father in heaven, help all of us to be

more determined about the life we are now to live, not that we shall earn our salvation, for it is alone a gift of grace, but just because we are saved by grace, help us to work as if our very salvation and the salvation of the world depended upon our labor, and at the same time, when all is done, do Thou help us to say. Lord, Thy grace, Thy grace only, has saved me. Dear Father in heaven, do Thou help that Thy Gospel may spread to the ends of the earth, and that every home may do missionary work at its own altar. Father, hear this prayer and save us all by Thy Gospel. We ask it in Jesus' name, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

47. Letters Of Recommendation. *Twelfth* *Sunday After Trinity.*

And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministrations of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. 2 Cor. 3:4-11.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

CORINTH WAS A CITY OF LEARNING and the teachers from the surrounding cities had to come there with letters of recommendation or they could get no positions. The apostle Paul brought no letter with him. He came with the law and with the Gospel, and with these letters he there established the church of God. He calls attention to these things in the first verse of this chapter: "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men. Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart."

The true minister of the Gospel does not need letters of recommendation from any church, nor to any church. The best letter I could ever get is this

congregation. You are my epistles. These letters that we write with ink are generally shoved into some pigeon-hole and no one sees them but the one who receives them; but you are epistles read on the streets, read in your business places, read wherever you go, and if you do not live as you are taught, you are a poor recommendation for me; if you do live as you are taught, you are the best letters that I can ever get. I wish to call attention this evening to:

Letters Of Recommendation

The letters spoken of in this epistle are just two:

- I. The Law.
- II. The Gospel.

The law is a letter of God, and it is a glorious letter, and a letter unto death. The Gospel is also a letter of God, a more glorious letter, and a letter unto life. These two letters may the Holy Spirit write deeply on our hearts tonight.

1. The Law of God

First of all, there is the law of God.

“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.”

The apostle Paul calls attention to the fact that the law of God is the letter of God, written with His own finger. The Jews at this time were making a good deal of trouble in Corinth because they thought that the law was not honored as it should be. In spite of the fact that they had been led to Christ and accepted the Gospel, they were still trying to live according to the law of the Jews and Moses, basing all their hope of salvation on the keeping of

the law. This was error, and the apostle Paul in order to show them their error, teaches them that while the law is God's letter, a glorious letter, it is a letter unto their condemnation, and then holds up the more glorious letter of the Gospel. The law of God is meant to be God's letter. If there is anything in the Bible that should be called God's letter above everything else, it is that law which was written with God's own finger. Did not God trace every letter on the tables of stone before He handed the law to Moses? And when God did write that law on Mount Sinai, did He not trace the same letters that He had written in the hearts of Adam and Eve when He created them? Do you realize, as you sit before me tonight, that you have the trace of God's own letters in your heart? You know there is only one true and living God; you know that you should not take God's name in vain; you know in your own heart that it is your duty to remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy; you know that it is your duty to honor your father and mother that it may be well with you, and you may live long in this world; you know that it is your duty not to kill, but to love your fellowmen, and even your enemies; you know that it is wrong to commit adultery or fornication; you know it is wrong to steal, or lie, or covet; you know in your own heart that God's finger has traced the letters that are in your own conscience and in your own heart. The Corinthians knew it, and Paul knew it, and no man will deny it. It is God's letter of commendation.

That was a glorious letter. You remember the history of the giving of the law, how it thundered and lightened on Mount Sinai; how Moses in the presence of God had a face that shone so brightly that he had to cover it with a veil when he stepped down into the presence of the Israelites. That was a glorious law. No wonder he had to cover his face, standing so near to God. If you and I would dwell just a little nearer to God, our faces would show it.

It was not only a glorious letter, but this letter was a letter of condemnation. "How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." And previous to that the apostle says, that the letter killeth. We would not for a moment say this letter of condemnation, of the law was originally intended to kill; on the contrary, the law of God offers life and salvation to every one who does perfectly keep it. If you were born without sin and never did sin, you would be saved by the law. The law says, Be ye holy for I am holy. The law says,

If you do not sin, you have life. If, therefore, I say once more, you had not been born in sin, and you never did sin, you would need no Savior. The glorious law would save you all. But mark you, what good does it do for a black man to hear that the white man is free? What good does it do the poor man to know that the millionaire has a free ride across the ocean? What good does it do a poor sinner, born in sin, and having transgressed the Divine law, to hear of this letter of condemnation, when it says he that breaketh one of these commandments breaketh all; cursed is every one that keepeth not all these commandments? This law, intended to give light, by its perfection, comes to the imperfect man and says, you are cursed. The same thing is true of all laws. The same law that keeps you and me out of prison chains and out of the penitentiary, is the same law that drives the guilty man behind the walls. the same sun that makes yonder grass grow and brings forth the flowers and the buds when the roots are in the ground, shining on those roots turned upside-down, will kill them. And thus you see how your blessing may become a curse. This letter of commendation, therefore, written on your heart, is the very commandment and the very letter that will condemn you. For that reason the apostle Paul writes this letter to the Corinthians and shows them that there is another letter that is also of God.

II. The Gospel

"For inasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.'

He is writing this letter to Christians, to those who have been saved by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Now, he says, I want to call your attention to another letter of God. It is the letter of Christ. It is not the letter written over on Mount Sinai by the finger of the Father; it is the letter written over on Calvary by the Son of God, who dipped His hand into His own blood and wrote there this wonderful letter: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that

the wicked should turn from his evil way and live. This also, my friends, is a letter of God. Oh, what a comfort it is to the poor sinner, condemned by the letter of the law, to find another letter handed over to him by Jesus Christ, telling him that the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God cleanseth us from all sin. The one letter says. Here are your sins. What will you do? Cursed is every one that transgresseth the law. Here comes the other letter and says, Jesus was cursed for that letter; Jesus was cursed for your sin that demanded death; Jesus did die; that letter demands the punishment of eternal hell for those sins, and here is One that did suffer the agony of hell; here is a letter that says, I made the atonement for your sins; here is one that says. They are blotted out with My blood. And this letter the Christian must have, letters of commendation.

Not only are both these letters, letters of God, but one is more glorious than the other. It is true that the thunders roared and the trumpet sounded and the lightnings flashed on Mount Sinai when the law was written by the finger of God; but let us not forget there is another mountain over there called Calvary; let us not forget that the heavens were darkened and that the graves gave up their dead when this other letter was written. Let us not forget that the angels of heaven that accompanied the star of the east, and came down on the very plains of Bethlehem, were interested in this second letter. And let us not forget that the great Commander and Ruler left us another message: Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. For this is the more glorious letter of the two.

“For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.”

Yes, Moses came down from that mountain with the first letter and with his face shining; Jesus Christ was up on the Mount of Transfiguration with the other letter and His whole body was shining. The former light has passed away; the first light shall not live forever, but the light of the cross, the Gospel, shall shine on into all eternity. More glorious is the second letter than the first.

The first letter killeth; the second giveth life.

“Not That we are sufficient of ourseJves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”

There you get the difference between the two letters. The law of God says, Keep Me and I will save you. But you have not kept the law. The same law says, I will condemn you. The second letter comes and says, You are condemned and I pronounce you free. Trust in the Savior and you shall be saved. The Holy Spirit takes the second letter and applies it to your heart and says, Take Christ as your Savior; trust fully in Him; your sufficiency is of God and not of yourself; trust in Him fully and you have peace with God, and then you are truly a child of God.

Go forth, then my dear hearers, God-ward. Our text tonight begins with the words:

“And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward.”

There is something in every man’s heart that says after all, there is a hereafter; there is something in every man’s heart that says, there is a better way of living than I have lived; there is a better home somewhere than I have got; there is more comfort than I have received so far; there is a God and there is a way to come to Him and that way is through Jesus Christ, who said, I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no man cometh to the Father but by Me. There is in every man’s soul and in every man’s heart a something that says, I am immortal; I am not dead when my body lies in the coffin; the old man, my body, is giving away, but there is something in me that is young; there is something in me that cannot die. The soul of an old man is as young as the soul of a child. The philosophers of old knew that the soul is immortal without the Word of God, but they never could find the way. Christ has shown us the way. God has pointed it out to us in this letter of recommendation, showing us how to serve God and go God-ward. Walk in His path and follow Him, and be faithful to Him until death that you may receive the crown of eternal life. And this very night God comes to us in His Holy Supper and says, I will come to you, and stand at the door of your heart and knock, and I will sup with you and you with Me; I will come to you that you may come to Me. There may be some here tonight whose hearts are heavy, who are troubled with this and that, and this same merciful

God comes in this beautiful letter of commendation to you and says, “Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me.” This is the good news, the Gospel, the glorious news of the letter of recommendation. May God bless you all, is my prayer. Amen.

48. Who Hath Bewitched Us?

Thirteenth Sunday After Trinity.

Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. Gal. 3:15-22.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THIS WORLD IS FULL of unthankful people. People who ought to enjoy the liberty they have do not appreciate it. I think the most unthankful student I ever saw was one who was constantly supported by the church, an object of charity – always complaining that the meals were not fit to eat, and yet I had the pleasure of staying all night at his home, and while I have never complained about any meals in my life, I must say those were the poorest meals I ever ate; they came from the home of the boy who was constantly complaining that the good meals of charity were not fit to eat. This young man was only a picture of thousands in our own country, however. We find men who are complaining about the wages of the country, complaining about the privileges of this land, and this and that, and yet they came from places in the old country where they could not earn one-third what they can

here, and their homes were not nearly as good as they are here. Oh, the unthankful immigrants of our land!

Let us not forget that this is human nature. There were the slaves of Egypt, working under the lash of Pharaoh's subjects. Those men were constantly complaining about their hard trials, and when God finally heard their prayers and sent Moses to deliver them, and they had crossed the Red Sea in safety, and were receiving bread from heaven every day, what did they do but murmur and complain and long to go back to slavery again! Unthankful Israelites!

In our own text we find that the Galatians were a people to whom God sent the bread of life through the apostle Paul; they had been edified and learned to appreciate the Gospel, but it was only a short time until they were again willing to go back into the bondage of sin, and consequently Paul begins this chapter with the striking phrase:

“Oh, foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?”

We might well say in these days that there are many foolish moralists, men who are trying to get to heaven by the fulfilling of the law, when they know that they cannot be saved by the law, but only by the Gospel; and these moralists are not all found outside of the church. It is a question whether we are not all more or less Pharisees, more or less given to the idea that after all we shall earn our own salvation. I might call out this evening in the language of the apostle Paul: Who hath bewitched us? That will be our question tonight, which we desire to answer. May the Holy Spirit help us to see ourselves as we are, and to appreciate the liberty of the true Gospel.

Who Hath Bewitched Us?

- I. We know the truth.
- II. Why do we not obey the truth?

I. We know the truth.

Paul cried out: “Oh, foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?” and shows them that the truth had evidently been set before them. They knew it, and we know it. There are some things that we know. We know the truth of the law, and we know the truth of the Gospel. As to the law, we know how we got it; we know what it is, and we know that it cannot save us.

We know, first of all, how we got the law. The apostle, speaking of this law, says:

“Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not. And to seeds, as of many; but as of one. And to Thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.”

In speaking of these four hundred and thirty years, the apostle refers to the time that the children of Israel sojourned in Egypt, and you will remember after they passed over the Red Sea, God gave them the written law on two tables of stone. Now this law given to them on two tables of stone was first written in their own hearts in the morning of creation, and was not only written on the two tables, but it was written by God’s own finger, and preserved in the Word which shall stand, though heaven and earth shall pass away. They knew about this law, how it was received.

They knew how this law was received, and they knew what it was. we know how it came to us, and we know what it is. We know that the first table demands of us to love God with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our might, with all our strength. We know that God’s law demands of us that we love our neighbor as ourselves.

Or, to be more minute, in this law we know who the true and living God is, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; we know that His name should not be taken in vain; we know that the Sabbath Day should be remembered and kept holy; we know our duty to our fathers and mothers; none of us are ignorant on this point; we know we have no right to hate our fellowmen; we have no right to take any one’s life; we know it is our duty to live pure and upright lives; we know we have no right to take what is not our own; we know it is our duty to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; we know that to covet is a sin, a great crime before God. And we

know another thing; we know that if we do not try to keep this law that the curse of it will come down upon our children and children's children. For seven long years two men whom I know by name, were resting under the awful cloud of robbing their own bank, in Lima, Ohio. You have read the report during the past few days, how these men were caught who robbed the bank, and that the janitor was the man that helped in the robbery, for which the safe companies have offered sixteen thousand dollars of reward. The question has been for seven long years, how could any man break into a safe with a time lock. Night before last the man that actually robbed the safe told them how it was done. He stepped inside the safe and told them to lock the door; in just eight and one-half minutes after it was locked he was out. This same man tells us how he robbed those two Jews, who for seven long years have been looked upon as thugs and thieves of their own bank, when they were innocent. Brethren, we are often doing people a great harm and great wrong by condemning them on circumstantial evidence; and I believe the time has come that we never should condemn any one unless the testimony is absolute and without doubt. The reason I mention this – this young man that robbed that bank had a grandfather who was a Lutheran; that grandfather years ago left the Lutheran church because something was said that he didn't like; he never returned again; he reared three sons, each one of whom again had sons, and each one has now a son in the penitentiary, except the last, and the third will have in a few weeks. He thought he did something wise when he stepped outside of the church of God and began to serve the devil; but he had learned when a young man, I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me. He knew it, and in spite of the fact that he knew it, he stepped out and brought the curse down upon his children and children's children, and so the third one is going to the Ohio Penitentiary in a few weeks to come, all because this man did not try to keep God's holy law.

I say we not only know the origin of this law, how we got it; we know what it is, and we positively know that it cannot save any man. "For as many as are of the works of the law' are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Again it is said in our text: "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the

hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid; for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin.” We see from these words that the law of God will curse every man on earth, no difference who he is. The man that is born in sin is never able to keep a perfect law perfectly, and the law of God demands perfection, and is not satisfied with anything less. If you were to keep nine commandments perfectly and were to break one, you would break all of them and sin against God. Remember then, dear friends, that we know that by the law not one of us can be saved.

We not only know the truth of the law, but we know the truth of the Gospel.

We know the Gospel is older than the law. We know from God’s own Word that before the foundation of the world was laid, we were called in Christ. That is the Gospel. We know from our text tonight that the promise of a Savior who was to be a mediator was given to Abraham before the law was given on Mount Sinai; and we know that when a man makes a will he makes it for himself, and when he signs it, no other man can change it; that will is made. I cannot make your will and you cannot make mine. When you have made your will no other man has got a right to alter that will. And just so when the Lord our God gave the promise to Abraham that through his seed the nations of the earth should be blessed, that this seed should be a mediator, there was a promise given that this mediator should not be simply man nor simply God, but God and man; for how could one be a mediator between the Father and mankind, if he were only man, or if He were only God? We are asked to take the God-man, the One who as God can take hold of the Father’s hand and say, I am Thy Son, and yet can reach down and take hold of the hand of humanity and say, I am the Son of man. The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost. This promise of the Savior was given long ago, and we know it.

We not only know how the Gospel originated, but we know what it cost. This Mediator had to lay down His life to purchase this Gospel for us. If you want to know what this Gospel is worth, then look over on Calvary’s hill and see your Savior carrying His cross; see, when the cross is planted, who it is that hangs there with His hands and feet pierced, and the crown of thorns upon His head! See Him hang there for three long hours under the

bright and burning sun, that you may know that this is the Son of God; and then see the sun go down at noon; see in the darkness there that all nature proclaims this is really the Son of God. Hear Him moan and groan all alone bearing the sin of the world. Hear Him cry out after six hours on that cross, My God! My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? Remember, He had to become your Redeemer and mine; He had to bear our curse upon Himself, so that He, Himself, felt the curse. Listen to these words again: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident, for, The just shall live by faith; and the law is not of faith, but the man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written. Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." You will never understand those words which I have just quoted from Jesus Christ, unless you remember that if you had been hanging there for six long hours, sinner that you are, you would have cried out. My God! My God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Now the innocent Christ, in order to become your Redeemer and mine, to pay the price, had to feel our curse upon Him, the curse of the whole world, and therefore, felt God forsake Him. And I ask you to look at Him when He bows His head in death and says. It is finished. Look at Him as they take Him down off of the cross and lay Him in a borrowed grave. What is this? What does it mean? It means this is the price that the great Mediator paid for the sins of the world. That is what the Gospel cost, my dear friends, and we know it.

We not only know the truth of the Gospel as to its origin and worth, but we know what it offers to us. This same Gospel comes to you and to me, poor, lost, condemned sinners, and says, You cannot be saved by the law; you are cursed; but here is One that has fulfilled the law for you. It is Christ. He wants to save you. He comes to you with open hands and a heart full of mercy and says, I want to forgive you. Dear lost soul, I want to save you. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me. This Savior cursed, bearing your curses and mine, cries out: Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God and there is none else. Dear friends, that is what the Gospel is: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. You know this, and I know it.

II. Why Do We Not Obey The Truth?

Then let me ask the question, Why do we not obey this truth? Why do we not obey the truth of the law and why do we not obey the truth of the Gospel?

As to the law, why do we not accept the condemnation of the whole world? We talk about the poor heathen, and we talk about the necessity of preaching the Gospel, but I am afraid in our general actions we do not believe what we say, when we positively know from our own observation and history that a large portion of the world has never heard of Christ yet; when we know that a large number of people in the world are living today in utter darkness and have never heard the blessings of the Gospel, how can we be satisfied in doing what we are doing for missions? Now the law of God condemns every man on earth. Not a single soul has ever kept the law perfectly. The poor heathen are under condemnation and we know it. If we know it, why do we not obey? If you knew there was a man five miles from here tonight under a great weight, and your rolling the weight away would save his life, you would run to save him; but we hear the news every day of our lives of the millions and millions living in total darkness, and we sit down in our own beautiful church and sing songs of praise, and we pray, and when it comes to sending men to proclaim the Gospel, we are not doing it. Why will we not obey the truth? Who hath bewitched us? Who hath so convinced us it is our duty to do nothing, when everything tells us of the duty to do more? Why do we not accept what God's Word so plainly proclaims, that all are under the curse of the law?

“But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”

Not only do I ask why we do not accept that condemnation of the whole world, but why do we not accept the Divine law and obey it, as a rule of life? I do not say you will be saved because you keep the law, because it isn't true; you cannot keep it perfectly; but I do say because you are saved you ought to try your best to keep that law, because it is the law of perfection; and yet it does seem to me that so many of us are not trying to keep this law. How many people are there that are still debating between the

true God and the unknown God? How many people there are that still will curse and swear and take God's name in vain, even though they call themselves Christians? How many people there are that are living every Sunday as if God were a liar, as if His Word were not true, as if they never heard at all: Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Oh, who hath bewitched us? Why will we not obey truth? We all know that we should treat father well; we know that we should treat mother well, and yet often young people disobey their parents. Oh, who hath bewitched you? Don't you know the truth, and do you not know what God's Word demands of you? We know that we should love each other, but how much hatred, how much jealousy, how many mean things are said of our betters. Oh, who hath bewitched us? Why can we not love one another? And oh, how often we live lives that are not pure in God's sight. Why do we not obey God's command, and why not try to live upright lives? How many people there are who still try to take advantage of the others in business, when they know we should not steal. Why do we not take God's commandments and try to keep them? How many people will tell a lie just to tell a story, or to make it suit any case, when they know that God said. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. Why will we act like him who is the father of lies? Why not tell the truth? And why such coveting? Why such a miserable reputation for giving? Why are we willing to spend anything for the world and nothing for God, when we know better? There is no question. Why will we not obey the commandments of God and try to walk in His ways?

Again I say, why do we not try to obey the Gospel? Why do we not accept Jesus and have peace? Those that are trying to get peace through the law never will get it. These poor Galatians had been rightly taught to have the liberty of the Gospel, but hardly had Paul left them until they were going back to the Jewish law trying to comfort themselves. Do you notice that people who are trying to find peace in the law, never find it? They are unhappy, trying to find peace in their own hearts instead of in the heart of God; trying to find righteousness in their own breasts instead of in Jesus Christ; trying to find it where it cannot be found, instead of finding it where it can be found. Why do we not obey the Gospel and accept Jesus? Why do we not accept the peace He wants to give us? Being justified by faith we have peace with God, and that is the only way – justified by faith.

Let us not only ask ourselves the question, Why not obey and accept Jesus and His peace; but why not proclaim this saving Gospel to a dying world? And when we know the law and its condemnation, if we know the condemnation of the world, why do we not obey the Gospel and proclaim it? The great King of kings and Lord of lords, when He left the world, left this great command:

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

For nearly two thousand years that word has been hurling from the very mouth of God, Go! Go! Go! and we have not gone yet. When will we go? When will we go? Listen, my friends, When will we go? God is commanding us, and we are waiting, waiting, waiting. Think of the thousands and millions of professed Christians today that could send the Gospel to the ends of the earth in one year, if they would only do it, but they will not. When will they go? Why will you not obey? Oh, who hath bewitched you? Paul cried out: “Oh, foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you.” So I cry out tonight: Who hath bewitched us?

It is very plain who has done it. It is Satan, himself. What has he done? He has tried to put error into our hearts; he has tried to make us believe that these things are not so essential. He led the Galatians from the Gospel of understanding down to the slavery of the law, and he is trying to lead us back into the slavery of the law, instead of obeying the Gospel.

Not only has he planted error in our hearts, but he has also created doubt therein. Oh, the doubt that we are finding all the time in our souls. And who is putting it there? The very one that has bewitched us – Satan. If he can just get us to doubt the promises, then he has won the victory.

What more has he done? Not only put doubt into our hearts, but procrastination as well. That is one of the great sins in these days. People know they ought to be Christians; they know that they ought to be saved and serve God; they know they ought to do something for missions, but they are just waiting a little while yet, and they think it is time yet. Many a man is willing to give his heart to God and he expects to do it before he dies, but the first thing you know the crape is hanging on the door; his body

in the grave and his soul in hell, and he has been too late, that is all, too late! Who has bewitched him? Satan has.

Yesterday morning, as I was about to take the train for Fostoria, I saw a beautiful black dog coming down the track; a freight train was running past him; we saw the passenger train coming behind; we knew that the dog was in danger; we called for him to get off of the track; but no, there he stood and looked at us; the first thing we knew the engine hit him; he rolled under the engine; tried to get up and run past the wheel; the wheel caught him; his head was lying on one side of the wheel, his body on the other. He was warned, and would not get off the track. And I say this evening, who hath bewitched us? Thousands of people are coming down the track of life; they are going faster than they know; the engine of eternity is just behind; the cry comes: Oh, prepare to meet thy God! and they just stand and look; and the first thing you know they are in eternity. Too late! May God help us that we may know the truth and obey it.

Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, we thank Thee for the blessings of the hour. We pray Thee that Thou wilt lead us into Thy holy law, there to see our sins, and may that law become the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ Jesus. May we find in Jesus our Savior, the innocent One who has atoned for our sins, and paid the price, because He is God, and paid the penalty by His death. Help us in Christ Jesus to come to Thee, for Thou hast said that He is the way, the truth, and the life, and no man cometh to the Father but by Him. Therefore we come to Thee in His name and pray Thee to remember all our prayers of the past; remember all our prayers tonight, and do Thou grant us to receive the full liberty of children of God, and trust alone in the righteousness of Jesus Christ and His mercy. We pray Thee that none of us may be led astray by him who has bewitched men. Help that we may be free from error. Take out of our minds all doubt. Remove from before us all procrastination. May we go forth and do our duty in the right moment and always serve Thee in this life, and be with Thee forever. Hear this prayer in Jesus' name, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our

daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

49. The Path Made Plain.

Fourteenth Sunday After Trinity.

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness; idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies; envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith; meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the 'flesh with the affections and lusts. Gal. 5:16-24.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THE GREAT MISSIONARY, LOUIS HARMS, tells us of a converted heathen, who came to a missionary with these words: "How does it come, when I first knew you I was a heathen; then I had only one black heart. After I heard the Gospel and accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior, and was baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, then I received a white heart, and now I have two hearts, a black one and a white one, and every time I want to do right and serve God the black heart says I shall not; and every time I want to serve the devil the white heart says I shall not. When I want to do what is right, the white heart says, Go on, and then the black heart says, Stop. When I want to worship the only true and living God the white heart says that is right, and the black heart says it is all wrong. When I want to curse, the black heart says go ahead, and the white heart says, Do not do it.

When I want to go to church, the white heart says Go, and the black heart says, I haven't got time. When I want to treat my mother well, the white heart says. That is right, and the black heart says. It doesn't make any difference how you treat the old man and the old woman. When I love my fellowmen the white heart says. That is right; the black heart says. Hate everybody; and so on. Now what is it? How does it come? What is the matter?

"Well," said the missionary, "I will tell you. Before you heard the Gospel you only had one heart; it was black. When you accepted Jesus Christ you did get a white heart, and now you have both of them, and you will have both of them until you breathe your last breath; then you will only have a white heart left in you with Christ forever."

There is a great truth in that story about the black and the white heart that many people do not understand. The natural man has no battle because he has only got the black heart. He who has no battle has nothing worth fighting for. The true Christian is the one that must say as Paul wrote to the Galatians: "Ye cannot do the things that ye would." The black heart would; the white heart says you dare not; and this battle goes on through life.

"This I say then. Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." If, therefore, you have no battle at all in life, you may make up your mind you have got only a black heart; but if you have a battle all through life, the one saying, Do this, and the other saying, Do not, then you can make up your mind that the Spirit of God is working in your heart and that you are on the right way. The main thing is to see to it that the white heart gets the victory.

The Path Made Plain

In olden times when these beautiful fields around here were covered with thick forests we are told that the Indians and our forefathers would go along certain lines and blaze their way. In other words, chip the bark off, so that they might find their way back. It is my purpose this evening to blaze the way and make it plain.

- I. The path to hell.
- II. The path to heaven.

I. The Path To Hell

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness; idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies; envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

There you see the path plainly cut. If a man wants to know whether he is going to destruction or not, it isn't hard to find out. There are just four things he must notice carefully. The path to destruction is marked by an *unbridled lust*; by *Christless religion*; by the *spirit of strife* and finally by a *dissipated life*.

1. Unbridled Lust

I say it is not a hard thing for a man to know whether he is going to destruction or not. There is such a thing as an *unbridled lust*. A man ought to thank God for lust; he ought to thank God for his manliness; a woman should thank God that she is womanly, but beware that you do not unbridle lust and let it have its own way. As sure as you do that, you are going on the path to destruction. “Adultery; fornication; uncleanness; lasciviousness;” – there you have a picture of sensuality; there you have a picture of man in his natural state, running wild, without a bridle, going down on the steed of death to destruction. And I tell you there are many people only waiting for an opportunity to sin; with them it is no question whether it is right or wrong; their eyes are constantly open, watching for an opportunity to ruin another family, another home, to bring destruction not only upon themselves but upon others. O God, pity the old bachelors in this city just watching to ruin homes; and God have mercy on the homes being ruined by men who have not got the manhood to have families; who haven't got the manhood to bear the burdens of life and to be true to humanity. I need not tell this intelligent audience how many there are that are going to destruction, and they know it. The path is plain.

2. Christless Religion

Along by the side of this unbridled lust goes *the Christless religion*. Some people seem to think if you have just got a little religion about a thing it is all right, forgetting that the path to hell is just as religious as the path to heaven. Beware of false religions. The apostle Paul wrote them down in these words:

“Idolatry; witchcraft... heresies.”

We have a great many people in these days who seem to think if you have a building with a tower and pulpit, no difference what is taught there, it is just as good as any church, and they are the ones that have never been instructed, have no ground for their faith, no idea of doctrine; do not know what truth or error is, and consequently they are the kind of people that are very religious, but have no Christianity, going down to destruction. If you remember the first temptation of Satan, when he tempted Christ, it was quite a religious meeting, and you mistake the whole temptation if you do not see that the devil was just as religious as God was. It was Satan that proposed the prayer-meeting. Satan said: If you will fall down and worship me, I will give you the kingdoms of the world; make a God of me; let's just have a little prayer-meeting here. And so you will find all through the world, whenever you find a religion without Christ in it, it is idolatry; and wherever there is idolatry it is the path blazed toward hell, I do not care where you find it. The path is plain.

3. Spirit of Strife

And not only do we find the path made plain by Christless religion, but by the *spirit of strife*. The apostle described this spirit by these words:

“Hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders.”

Oh, what a brood of these satanic births that are found in the hearts of men, and when you look around you do not need to look very far to find jealousy, envy. It is found in the hearts of professed Christians. There are people in this world that just simply delight in trying to hate somebody, and say something terrible about some one, jealous of their prosperity, ever ready to

push some one down in order to lift themselves up, and that kind of spirit marks the spirit of one who would murder if he had a chance. There are people only watching for an opportunity to do something worse than to drive a dagger into the heart of man, and that kind of a spirit blazes the way toward hell. Just as the old angel that rebelled and became a devil never forgot his religion, so he who caused Cain to raise the club to kill Abel never forgot he was a murderer; he planted murder into the hearts of the people, and whenever you find yourself with an unforgiving spirit, hating this man and that one, always watching an opportunity for taking revenge, trying to hurt a man instead of lifting him up, mark you, you are on the path to destruction just as sure as the Bible is God's Word.

4. Dissipation

You usually find this same path is marked also by *dissipation*.

“Drunkenness, revelings, and such like, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

I want to give you a warning this morning. Any man on earth that proclaims against hell is a liar and he knows it. There is no use talking about these things being only opinions. God's Word is just as plain concerning hell as heaven, and that man who thinks he can go on in his own way, go on in the spirit of unbridled lust, in the spirit of unforgiving strife, and go in drunkenness and carousing and living an ungodly life, taking his body, which is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and debauching it, that man, I say, if he thinks he is going on in that way and go to heaven, will find he is mistaken on the great Judgment Day. There are a great many people who would not be found lying in the ditch, or in prison, or would not be found being hauled home in a cab because they are too drunk to walk, but they are always ready to have just a little booze on hands, just a little drink, just to go home and think. Now I have got another glass too much; and there are people in this world who are doing this; there are professed Christians who seem to think it is all right, just so long as they spend their own money, and just so long as they can walk on a sidewalk without falling off, and just so long as they do not rob anybody. Oh, my friends, there is only one right

way to live, and that is a sober life; and the only way to live a sober life is to be very careful not to take anything that will make you any other way.

I remember some time ago talking to a professor of one of our institutions in Columbus. He said, "In the midst of a storm on the ocean I would feel a great deal safer to know that the hand that is at the pilot hasn't had one drink of whisky, than to know that he had it"; and I want to say that any man is safer, if he quits drinking intoxicants as a beverage. And so I would urge upon you all to be very careful not to imagine you can go on reeling into heaven. You cannot do it. Do not imagine that you can lead a drunken life and then at last come out a saint. Do not think anything of the kind. The real truth is that you are going to live just about as you are going to die, and as you die you are going to lie in the grave, and as you lie in the grave you will rise on the Resurrection morning, and as you rise on the Resurrection morning you will spend eternity. This idea that some people have that in a moment they will be changed from children of the devil to angels of light, is a mistake. When men become Christians they become Christians by degrees. I am willing to admit the new birth is instantaneous; I am willing to admit that it is like a flash of lightning, but I will not admit that it comes with all its causes like lightning. The great truth of God's Word must be sown into the hearts of men, and every step you have ever taken in life has been by degrees. You did not learn to talk, or to read in a day; you didn't learn to walk in a day; you did not learn your trade in a day; you did not get your profession in a day; it took long and tedious work. Someone said to me the other day, Why, you ought to get rich at the salary you are getting. These dear people don't know that I spent fifteen years of my life getting nothing and spending part of father's farm to get an education. They do not know that a man has to work a long time to make up what he has lost. The real truth is we have got by hard work and toil what we have. If a man says to me, I don't see how you can do your work so easily, he forgets the oil that has been burned in the past to do it easily now; he forgets the work you have done in the past to do what you do now. And just as this is true in natural matters, it is true in religion. The man that is going to become a child of God when he dies has got to begin right away. He has got to grow in grace. So I come to you with this warning, do not imagine you are going to live a child of the devil in lust unbridled, with your Christless religion, and the spirit of strife and unforgiving hatred toward all men, living in your dissipation, and then at last, when lying on

your death-bed, hurry and call the preacher to hurry and offer a prayer. He will offer it, but your soul may go to hell while the preacher is praying. Do not forget it.

II. The Path To Heaven

I wish to make the path to heaven just as plain as the path to hell.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”

I would have you notice the way made plain by contrast. The way to hell is marked, first of all by unbridled lust; the path to heaven is marked by crucified lusts.

1. Crucified Lusts

Nowhere does God’s Word say when a man gets to be a Christian then he is just like an angel and cannot sin any more; that he has no temptations or trials any more. No. Paul knew better. Paul, at the end of his great life, cried out: I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith! The man that expects to go to heaven must take the lust that he has got and crucify it, and that means to hurt it; that means to nail it to the cross. When Jesus Christ was crucified on Calvary, there was no playing that day; there was shedding of blood; there was suffering; there was agony; there was the pain of hell in Jesus when He cried out, “My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Why did He thus cry? Because He was being crucified for the sins of the world; and when you have a temptation that seems to be leading you to death and destruction, thank God that you have the life in you; thank God that you have the power to be tempted and the manhood to be tested, and take the lust and crucify it, crush it, and fight against evil, and pray God to give you strength to do the right. Lead me, not into temptation, should be your prayer.

2. Christian Religion

In contrast with the Christless religion, you should have a Christian religion. “And they that are Christ’s” – are Christ’s. That tells it all. You have got to be Christ’s before you can be a Christian, and when you are a Christian remember that you have got a life that you did not have before. It is not necessary for a man to say on such and such a day and in such and such an hour, in such and such a way, I was born again. You do not know very much about your first birth, do you? I do not remember when I was born, nor do you; but I know I was, and so do you. The Lord Jesus tells us that as the wind bloweth and you know not where it came from nor where it goes, so it is with the new birth. It is enough for you to know the wind is blowing. You do not care where it comes from nor where it is going, just so long as you have the breezes. So it is with the new birth. We are told in God’s Word: Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God. This Holy Spirit brings into our hearts the seed of the new birth in many ways. He does it in Holy Baptism for the little child; through the preaching of the Word; through meditation on a single word of God. It may be you are out on the street just meditating on the words. Love of God, until he plants into your heart the seed of the new birth; but I do know when I love Christ; I do know when I love God’s Word; I do know when I pray; I do know when I love the things that are good and holy and hate the things that are bad; and if I do, I am born again, and I do not care how it happens; and that is the thing for you to know, that you love Christ; that you love the religion of Jesus Christ; that His Word is precious to your soul; that you enjoy a good Gospel sermon and love to sing songs of praise to His holy name; and what do you care how it happened? See to it that you are a child of God and love things that are good and holy; walk in the footprints of your Master and have a Christian religion, and when you have that you want Christ in that religion. When you find yourself among a band of people that do not ask whether you believe in Christ or not, ask yourself the question. May I do this? Remember the devil is religious, and religion without Christ is purely devilish. Remember the way to hell is blazed with religion with no Christ in it; the way to heaven is Christ all the time. “Jesus, lover of my soul; let me to Thy bosom fly,” is the very spirit of the way to heaven. It is all Christ on the way to heaven.

3. Christian Life

And that means Christian life. A man cannot be a Christian by leading the life of a child of the devil; he cannot walk on the way leading in the opposite direction, and expect to enter heaven's gate; he cannot walk on two ways leading in opposite directions at the same time. And so you find the life of a true Christian is described in these words: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love." Instead of hating everybody you love your enemies. Ask yourself the question. Do I love my fellowmen? Have I a love for the lowly and fallen? Have I a love for even those that hate me? You say you cannot love your enemies? The Christian knows better. He can. It is the way to heaven. It is the Spirit of Jesus. If I love my Savior and stay right close to the cross, can I hear him praying for those that drove the nails through His hands and feet. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do, and refuse to forgive my enemies? I can easily forgive you for you have never put a nail through my hands, and you never will. I can easily forgive you for you never drove a spear into my breast, and I do not think you ever will. I can easily forgive you, for you never put the crown of thorns on my head, and I do not think you will ever do it. If I have the Spirit of Christ I can forgive any man on earth. That is the way to heaven. And Oh, what a glorious thing it is to love and be loved, and true love is from Him who is love. The best definition that was ever given of God lies in these three words: God is love.

So from this love there flows out joy, happiness, love. The Christian – the man that walks along in this world with a long face never leads many people to Christ; never leads many people to heaven. Many young people are kept out of the Christian Church because of the church members and preachers who seem to make the Christian life look miserable to them. The thing for a man of God to do is to be the happiest man in the community. If there is a happier man in this city than I am, I would like to find him. Just as soon as I can find a profession in which I can be happier than the ministry, I will leave it, but I will never find it. The happiest hours of my life are right here, standing behind the Word of God, showing souls the way to heaven and warning them against the way that leads to destruction. That is happiness and joy. And the best thing that I can wish for you in this world is first of all that you be a saved man or a saved woman, and that there might be born to you a son who might preach the Gospel of Christ. Wish it to me, and I will thank God for the gift.

Peace! Oh, what a blessed thing it is to have peace. The man that goes down the path of destruction has no peace; the man that permits his lust to go unbridled is not happy; the man that has a Christless religion has no hope; the man that is constantly fighting with his neighbors has no peace nor happiness; the man that is living a dissipated life feels in his own body and soul the very fire and the flame of the hell he is trying to deny. Peace comes from faith in Jesus Christ. Trust in the Savior and not in the human heart, and along the path of eternal life you will find peace. And the more you find out what the human heart is, and the more you discover the patience of God with you, the more patience you will have with humanity. The older I grow, the more I study human nature, and the more I see of false humanity, the more patience I have got. There was a time when I felt that every sinner ought to be behind the walls; that every fallen man ought to be punished; but today my heart goes out for the poor fallen man. If there is any life I would rather spend than this one behind the pulpit and in the presence of this intelligent people, it would be to go to the lowest slums of the city, and there delve in the filth to lift up humanity. There is no grander and nobler life in the world than the spirit of long-suffering. You will find long-suffering along the path to eternal life.

Gentleness. Oh, how good it is just to offer a kind word to some one. You remember a few days ago three young men stood before this altar and united with this church. They will not be ashamed of it if I tell it tonight, that a year ago we found those people all in one little room, strangers in a strange land. Oh, they needed our sympathy and help then, and we gave it to them. Nothing lost. I baptized the twelfth son of that family last week; and that family, poor two years ago, has a beautiful home right off of Fourth Street in the city of Mansfield; and these three boys came into the church and could not help it, because gentleness is not forgotten. To take an enemy and pound him black and blue may be a satisfaction to the revengeful heart, but what good does it do? Whom does it help? What have I done? – made a worse enemy of the one who was an enemy. But take the enemy, the fallen, the poor, and speak a kind word, and lift them up, show them the right way and they will never forget it, and will want to go with you to heaven.

Kindness. God knows we are all mean enough, and there is enough badness in all of us, but it does do us good to see the goodness of a man that has the badness in him; and what we ought to try to cultivate more and more is the good that is in us, and my comfort in humanity is this, I never

found a man so low and so fallen that I could not find some good little spot somewhere to begin with to lift him up. I know that man is naturally a child of wrath, and I know that in a spiritual sense there is nothing good in any of us, no, not one; but the old spark of the Divine law planted into the heart of Adam has never been wholly effaced, and if I can find that spark I will kindle a fire with the goodness and power of the Holy Spirit.

How do we get all these good things? By having faith – *meekness*. Yes, faith. Some men think it is a hard thing to believe in Christ, a hard thing to believe in the Bible. I want to tell you, my friends, it is a terribly hard thing not to believe in the Bible, and it is a terribly hard thing not to believe in Christ. You will find that the enemies of the church will find fault with the preacher, and with the church members, and with this and that, but where is the enemy of the church that ever dared to find fault with Jesus of Nazareth? And so I say that the thing to do is to have faith in Jesus Christ, and cultivate this meekness, and walk in His footprints.

4. Temperance

One mark of the path to heaven we have yet, and that is temperance. On the side of destruction is that spirit, as I mentioned a while ago, of dissipation, but on the way to heaven is temperance. Not temperance in the narrow fanatical sense so many people look upon it. So many people think that if they do not touch strong drink they are temperate, but they will sit down and eat like swine. They think that if they neither touch nor handle strong drink they are absolutely temperate, but they will work Sundays and week days; they are not temperate. The path to heaven is marked by temperance, and that means the abuse of nothing, and the right use of everything; and that is the only sensible way of handling the subject of temperance with regard to strong drink, or anything else. The man that looks upon a barrel of beer or a keg of whisky as having the devil in it, has absolutely no conception of the truth nor religion. You cannot put the devil into a keg; you cannot put the devil out of man into drink. If all the people in the world were true Christians, you might roll the streets full of whisky and it would never do any harm. There is not a thing in this world that is not good, outside of man and the devil, but because man is bad naturally, and weak, he will go to the worst if he does not stand for the best. Consequently it becomes our duty as a people to guard and protect the home, to guard and

protect the church; and the time is coming in a very few weeks when every citizen in this city will be called upon to arise above his low and filthy politics and face the question. What is my duty to my son? What is my duty to my family, to my friends, and to my God? I preach no politics; I preach the Word of God; but I do say when you come to the test at the next election, do not forget the way to heaven, and do not forget the way to hell, and stand up for that which you believe in your own heart is for the welfare of humanity and for the glory of God.

Is the way plain? Then let me ask you a few questions in conclusion: Have you been going the right way? Which way have you been going? What has been your direction up to this hour? Now I realize the responsibility of the hour. There never has been an audience of this size gathered together as they are here from Sunday to Sunday, in which there isn't some one who is hearing the last sermon he will ever hear. Which way are you going tonight? I have blazed the way. You ought to know. Are you trusting in your own righteousness? Are you living a life of lust and shame? Are you living a dissipated life? Are you trusting in false religions? Have you the spirit of strife and envy? Stop right short. You are going to destruction. On the other hand, have you faith in Jesus Christ? Do you love purity, goodness, meekness, temperance? Are you putting your whole trust in the blood of Christ on Calvary's hill as your atonement? Are you living wholly and solely for God's glory and for the welfare of humanity? Are you baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and is it your purpose to be faithful to Him until death? If so, you are on the path that leads to glory.

There is only one way, and oh, what a glorious thing it is to preach this Gospel of Christ. If there were twenty-five ways to heaven you might lose yourself, but there is only one way. Christ said: I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, and no man cometh to the Father but by Me. Do you believe that? Have you accepted that way? Have you given the same effort to prepare for heaven that you have for your present life, for your business or trade? The opportunity is again given to you next Friday evening. I should be glad to see every man, every woman, in this audience who has never taken a thorough course of instruction in God's Word, in that upper room, and I am sure that if you do come twice, you would not miss the rest of the time unless sickness keeps you at home. Will you try it? And when you have received that instruction; when you have heard the last word that I

have to say to you, all that I ask of you to do is to use your good judgment, the means that God gave you to decide what you know in your own heart is right, and I will assure you that you will be on the way that leads to heaven.

Brethren, I am not talking with a month's experience, but with eighteen years of the ministry behind me, and many souls led to the Master. I am ready to say that I have never had a single man listen to me for fourteen evenings but that he came out on the side of God. Not one; Will you give the test? Are you interested enough to try? If there is a man in this audience that can teach me for my good, I will come and see him; I will thank him for it, and I will pay him for it; and here you have this work offered here for nothing, and it will mean more on the Judgment day than all the banks and all the insurance companies in the world. For what will it profit a man if he shall gain the world and lose his own soul? Will you do it? Which way? May God help you tonight to decide just exactly which way. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. These are the words of Jesus, who cannot lie. Amen.

Prayer

(Congregation uniting with pastor) O heavenly Father, we come before Thee in this evening hour, thanking Thee that the house of God is a house of prayer. We pray Thee this evening that Thou wilt help each one of us to profit by the words which we have heard this day. Do Thou help us to hate the evil and seek the right. Help us to leave the path that leads to eternal destruction and to walk on the only way that leads to heaven. Give us a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Help us to live for the welfare of humanity and for the glory of God. We ask this all in Jesus' name, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

50. Practical Principles.

Fifteenth Sunday After Trinity.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Gal. 5:25-6:10.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THIS TEXT IS A CONTINUATION of the text of last Sunday, which shows us clearly not only the way to heaven, but the practical use that we are to make of this way. We heard last Sunday the way made plain, both to hell and to heaven, but let us not suppose for a moment that pure religion consists simply in profession. Remember that a Christian life means more than simply to go to church and sit down and sing hymns and pray; it means in daily life to live as God would have us live, in order that those who are around us may be led on the right way to heaven. There are, therefore, certain:

Practical Principles

Found in the lesson of this evening, which the Holy Spirit, we pray, may help us thoroughly to understand, and one of the very first is this:

I. Let us walk in the right path ourselves.

“If we live in the Spirit, then let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another.”

“For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall we have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.”

In these words we plainly learn that the principle of life should be that we walk not in the path of our own selection, but rather in the path that is selected by the Lord our God, through the Holy Spirit. A young man who had just started to college came home and met a dear relative of his and said, “Now I am going to be a professional man.” Then said his relative, “Then what?” “Then I am going to become a man of fame, in law and in government.” “Then what?” “After I have made my reputation, I am going to gather up wealth.” “Then what?” “Then I am going to build a large mansion and live like a king.” “Then what?” “Then I shall try to go and treat my children the same way, and give them each a home.” “Then what?” “Well, then I shall spend my last days trying to take care of what I have gathered up, and live in honor and fame.” “Then what?” “Then, I suppose, like all others, I shall die.” “And then what?” And the young man began to think as he never thought before, and when he left that uncle of his, constantly he heard the question, “And then what?” until he made up his mind the thing to do is first of all to be prepared to meet his God, and follow in God’s path of His own selection.

We are warned here against the sin of pride and jealousy and envy, against the spirit of thinking ourselves better than other people are, and let us not for one moment think that this spirit is seldom found. There isn’t a village in which there are not a few people who think themselves above the others; there is not a congregation in which there isn’t some one or more who think they are a little above the rest; there is hardly a community to be found on earth where this spirit of pride and envy and jealousy does not exist. Now then, the practical lesson for us to learn in true Christianity is

this, that we do not select our own path, but walk in the path of the Holy Spirit. “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” Let us not imagine that we are so far better than other people; let us not think others are so far below us, but remember we are only doing that to exalt ourselves. “For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” What is the way of the Spirit? The Word of God itself is the way of the Spirit, and when we hear this Word of God we are in the path that He leads us. When we obey the truth that we hear, and hear it for the purpose of learning that we might live it, then we are walking in God’s holy path. When we obey His commandments and try to hold fast to His promises and grow in grace day by day that we might ourselves live nearer to Him and thus bring others with us, then we are walking in the path of the Holy Spirit.

In other words, we must make diligent use of the means of grace. God comes to us, as we have heard so often, in the Word and the Holy Sacraments, and when that Word is preached to us we should hear it; when that Word is taught in the class we should be there; when we have the opportunity to be baptized, we ought to be baptized, if we have not been; and when the Lord’s Supper is celebrated we should be found at the table and there eat of the body and drink of the blood of Christ, and thank God for the means of grace. And then, on hearing His Word, we should always ask, What improvement can I make in my life? How walk in the center of the path that God has selected? This is the practical lesson that we should all obey, to walk in the path that God has selected ourselves.

II. Lead Others In The Right Path

Another practical lesson in this epistle is this: Let us lead others in the right path.

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, least thou also be tempted.”

I think the text we heard last Sunday morning and the heart searching, must have made each one of us feel, I am the chief of sinners. And if it did, with that heart searching we had, it will not be long until we find that it is a very

common thing for a man to be overtaken in a fault. Where is the man that has not been overtaken in a fault? And if we are going to walk on the right path, what are we going to do? Shove him off of the right path; push him down; boast in fact that this man has fallen? No. Let us in the spirit of meekness go to such an one and tell him where his fault is. And while we are going, remember that the next time it will be his opportunity to come to me and tell me where my fault is. I will this time in all kindness try to lift him back on the path from which he has departed, and remember that while I am going after him, I want to do that with the same spirit I would like to have him come and lead me back when I go a step out of the way. Oh, the spirit of meekness and love which is found in Jesus Christ. If that spirit were used to win souls for heaven, how many would be on that path! Our first duty, therefore, should always be to lead those back again who have left the path of right.

Can you not in looking around you think of some one who one time was busy in the kingdom of God; some one who was busy in the Church of God? But where is he today? He has stepped out of the path; wandered away; fallen by the wayside. Have you ever gone to him with the spirit of meekness and love, and in all privacy tried to bring him back, that no one would know it? Have you ever treated him as a mother would take her sick child and press it to her bosom and give it the kiss of love? The practical path of love is always to be kind to the fallen: to always be kind to those who have stepped out of the way, and bring them back. This does not mean that we should look upon sin lightly; it does not mean that we should not thunder a warning into the hearts of those that seemingly have hard hearing; it does not mean that the laws of Sinai should not thunder in their ears; but it does mean, when the law has done its work, to come with the spirit of meekness and bring back those that have left the right path.

And if it is our duty on the right path of life to bring those back who have fallen by the wayside, surely it is our duty to bring those into this path that have never been there. If it is wrong to let one fall off of the right path, it is surely wrong to let those off that have never been on the right path. The very same spirit, therefore, urges us to hold those who are on the right path and keep them in the right, is the same spirit that says: Go out and find the fallen, and find the lost, and bring them to their Savior and to salvation. "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, least thou also be tempted."

III. Let Us Begin Burden-Bearing

A third practical principle in this text is this: Let us begin burden-bearing.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens.” “For every man shall bear his own burden.”

Those two verses seem to be direct contradictions. In the second verse we are commanded to bear one another’s burdens, and in the fifth verse commanded to bear our own. How is it possible? We are to bear burdens that others cannot bear; and we are to bear burdens that others should not bear.

There are burdens that others cannot bear. The world is full of aged people who can toil no longer to earn their bread. The world is full of hospitals and sick people who cannot earn their daily bread. The world is full of cripples and little infants and the helpless all around us. There is a class of people who absolutely cannot bear their burdens. What is our duty? With the spirit of Christ, if we are practical Christians, we will reach out and help to bear the burdens of others. If one of our own number is sick and cannot earn his bread, it is a Christian duty, and love to our fellowmen demands it, that we help to support that man. If the Christian Church had always done its duty, you would not find today so many poor people paying all their money to worthless lodges. If all the Christian people would simply keep in mind their love to their fellowmen, and burden-bearing duty, then when one is sick we are to run to him and help him, not because we had vowed to do so; not because we had promised to help this one and let the other go, in which there is no love at all. No. Then we would help a man because he is a man, because he needs help; and we would not go to a man and say. If you pay your dues you will get help, and if not, you cannot. We would go to the poor man and say. Because you cannot pay your dues, because you haven’t anything to pay your dues, we will help you to bear your burden. That is the Christian love. That is the practical principle that lies in this beautiful epistle tonight. Yes, let us bear one another’s burdens.

There are burdens that others should not bear. We have a great many people in the present day who seem to think that the world Owes them a liAdng. They walk around in this world as if to say, No difference whether I work or not, I must have my bread and clothing; if I cannot get them

honestly I will steal; the world owes me a living. The world does not owe any man a living. There is only one promise for a living, and that is by the sweating of the face. “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.” If the world owes one man a living without work, it owes it to every man, and if every man were to quit work today, it would not take one year until the world would be starving. The very principle of living depends upon not only labor, but hard labor. Consequently there are burdens that others should not bear. It is not your duty nor my duty to bear the burden of a lazy, strong man. The first thing that ought to be required, therefore, of every citizen, whether man or woman, is that he or she be willing to and shall labor to earn their daily bread. If there is a heavy weight to carry, and two of us were ordered to carry it, if I fail to carry my part I am shifting the burden on the other man, but if I bear my part I am bearing his burden, because it is the very burden that he would have to carry if I did not. So you see, after all, there is no contradiction between these two verses. If you bear your own burden you are bearing a burden that somebody else will have to bear if you do not. Consequently by bearing your own burden, you are bearing the burden of your fellowman.

And why is it that there are so many people burdened today? Because there are so many that are not bearing any burden. One man in the family has to earn the bread for all that eat at the table; he has to buy the clothing for all that wear them. There are too many people in the present day that are earning nothing, like parasites, hanging on to those who are willing to toil, and the consequence is that those that are burdened are burdened too much and others are not bearing any burden whatever. Let us learn the practical lesson this very evening that the true Christian must always try to bear his burden.

IV. Appreciate Teachers of God’s Word

The fourth practical lesson is this: Let us fully appreciate the teachers of God’s Word.

“Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.”

We understand in the beginning of the ministry the apostles and their successors were not offered large salaries. They went and preached the Word of God wherever it was to be preached, and depended wholly and solely upon the good hearts and good will of the people who heard the Word, to support them. And now and then we hear men say in the present day that the old preachers had it so much harder than now. They tell us of men that used to preach three or four places and only got two hundred dollars a year. I know that is true. I know some men who preached two or three places for two hundred dollars a year, 25 or 30 years ago, who laid up \$150.00 out of those \$200; and I know furthermore there are men in these days getting nearly two thousand dollars that cannot lay up a cent. Let us not imagine that salary is always to be judged entirely by the amount of dollars. What does it cost a man? That is the question. Do you know that your own pastor does not lay up as much money as the girl that works for him? Do you realize that? One thing, however, has always been God's rule, and it is today yet, and that is that he who teaches the Word of God is to live of that Word. The apostle tells us in another place that we should not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn, and gives proof of the fact that he that teaches the Gospel should live of the Gospel. The ox that treads out the corn is never muzzled. Young people may not understand this. In olden times they had no threshing machines as they have today. They would throw the grain down on the floor, take the oxen and lead them in a circle, tramping out the grain; but they were never so mean as to make an ox walk in that ring all day, and tie his mouth shut and never let him eat a bite. When he treads out the corn he has a right to eat. So the apostle says every man is worthy of his hire; he says that the laborer should receive a living, and no difference what his calling, should have his daily bread. There is a practical lesson in that for every congregation, and that is when you have any man, no difference who he is, who is giving you the Word of life, it becomes your duty to see to it he is not in want, that he may constantly give his whole attention to the salvation of souls, and set an example worthy of following, giving and giving liberally, and showing the right spirit to those that follow. What right have I to ask you to be liberal and to be good and kind to the poor, if I am never able to be good and kind to them? The very first duty a man of God has is to show an example to people in every line, and I am always asking God that he may ever give me the right spirit to show you your duty to your fellowmen. The Apostle Paul lays down those

principles. “Let him that is taught in the law communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.” You owe it to your pastor – I am not speaking of myself – no difference who he is, that brings you the Word of Life – you owe him his living, just the same as you owe a man his money when he rolls stone or hauls lumber for you, when his day’s work is done.

And this is not only true in regard to pastors; it is true in regard to laymen. I am satisfied you children never can do too much for your parents who taught you the Word of God. If you have parents who never teach you the Word of God at home, they are not doing their duty. Train up a child in the way he shall go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

We owe a great debt to our Sunday school teachers who stand before us week after week and bring us the bread of life, and try to show us the better way to live, and how to die, and where to spend eternity. You never can get done doing good and saying good things about them and helping them along in this life. Are we always as kind as we ought to be to those who have instructed us in the Word of God?

How many people are not remembering their former pastors as they ought? I would love to see every man in this church always speak highly of those that have gone before. When you stop to think that out of all the pastors that have preached in this First Lutheran church, only two are living, do you realize what they have done for you? Do you realize what the first great missionary who carried the Word of God to Richland county, Ohio – Brother Ruth – did for you? Are you remembering the good that Dr. Fiery did here? Are you remembering the good that Dr. Wiles did here? When speaking of him are you only finding fault, or are you remembering how many, many souls he has led to heaven; and how good and kind he was to you in times of need? And when your present pastor’s work is done, will you remember he tried hard to lead you heavenward? Will you try to remember what he did for your children? Will you remember the good your superintendent is trying to do for you and your children? Will you remember your teachers, who meet weekly on Tuesday evenings, while you are spending your time in other places, preparing to bring the bread of life to you? These are practical principles that lie in this great lesson tonight.

V. Expect To Reap Exactly What You Sow

Another: Let us expect to reap exactly what you sow.

“Be not deceived: God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.”

What a beautiful text for a sermon! I wish I had an hour instead of a few minutes for these few verses. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.”

How many people there are who seem to think it is so nice to be funny, as we sometimes say, and in order that people may laugh at what we say, we will make fun of religion and things religious. Have you ever noticed that whenever Satan wants to make things real funny he tries to say something that will approach the sacred? Things never are so laughable as when they touch upon the Word of God, or the minister, or God Himself. Any story without the sacred in it is not ridiculous, but the moment you can associate the thing ungodly with things good and holy, then Satan makes us all think it is very funny and laughable. Some time ago I read a story of a weaver in Europe who one Saturday afternoon had almost completed the piece of cloth he was making. He said to his wife, “In one hour from now I will have finished this cloth.” His wife was a good Christian woman, and she said, “If it is the Lord’s will.” “Oh,” said the weaver, “I am going to finish it whether it is the Lord’s will or not,” and he gave the shuttle a swing; it went too far; he failed to catch it, and, reaching after it in his anger, he caught his foot and broke it, and lay there for six weeks; he did not finish the garment. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.”

Again, I read of a man in one of our European cities noted for sitting around in hotels, making fun of things good and holy. A member of the Christian church, his pastor, after having served for twenty years in that church, had decided at last to go to another city to preach. One evening this man said to his wife, “Next Sunday you need not bring me an ordinary handkerchief; you can bring me a sheet; I am going to cry when our pastor leaves.” He thought it was funny to bring the sheet. His wife was a good Christian woman, and she said: “It is a very solemn matter to me that my pastor is going away after having served us for twenty years; I would advise you not to mock, but if you want the sheet, I will get it.” He said, “Get it; I want it.” And she got it for him. Then on Wednesday he took sick; Thursday evening he died; Friday he was wrapped in the same sheet he

wanted to cry in on Sunday, and the pastor while preaching the funeral sermon, wept over the dead man that died mocking God. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.”

At a banquet a few years ago in New York City, one man suggested the idea of celebrating the Lord’s Supper in a jocular manner, and took up the wine and said, “Here I am drinking the Lord’s blood.” He fell back dead; and there was no question in the minds of his skeptical friends that God would not be mocked.

We know this with regard to earthly matters. There isn’t one of us tonight that does not know when we sow flower seed we expect flowers; when we sow wheat we expect wheat; when we plant corn we expect corn; when we sow grass we expect grass; and yet there are so many people in the present day that seem to think they can just sow a life of sin to the flesh, and reap heaven. It cannot be done. Whatsoever a man soweth, that will he reap – the same kind, and a larger quantity.

Yes, the same kind. “For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption.” We heard in last Sunday’s lesson what it means to sow to the flesh. A man that sows his unbridled lust is bound to reap hell; a man that sows in anger and sows to the flesh can never reap things that are spiritual. The question tonight is, What are we sowing? What are we sowing? There is a wonderful difference between the flesh and the Spirit. When we have a fleshly desire, oh, how we desire that! And the more we think over it, the more we desire it, and then, when that desire is fulfilled we are disgusted with ourselves – thoroughly disgusted. Not so with spiritual matters. Spiritual matters are the things we don’t want; we are trying to keep away from them just as long as we can, and then we get them by degrees, by the gift of the Holy Spirit, and when we find them, the joy grows greater and greater. Just the opposite. Lust begins with joy and the desire to be gratified, and becomes thoroughly disgusted with itself, goes to destruction and hell; but the spiritual desire begins with, “I don’t want to;” and then, “I will;” and then, “I have joy,” and “Oh, heaven is my home!” Just the opposite. Whatsoever a man soweth that will he reap. If you sow to the flesh you will reap corruption; if you sow to the Spirit you will reap everlasting life.

Not only will you reap what you sow, but I would call your attention to the fact that you will reap more than you sow. You never find a farmer so ignorant as to sow a bushel and a half of wheat to the acre with the

expectation of reaping only a bushel and a half the next year. No. When he sows a bushel and a half he is dissatisfied if he does not get twenty to thirty bushels. When a man buys his seed corn he does not buy it with the purpose of raising just as much as he planted, but buys a little seed that he may raise a lot of it. We all understand that solving means a larger harvest. When a man sows to corruption, what a harvest that will be! When a man sows to sin. Oh, what a harvest that will be! When we stop to think that the sowing time is much shorter than the reaping time; when we stop to think that the sowing of one week will bring a harvest that will feed us a year; Oh, what a harvest that will be when men have sown twenty years, thirty years, fifty years, seventy-five years, all to corruption! What a great harvest that will be of the flesh on that great Judgment day. We are not only sowing but we are sowing for a greater harvest, and we will get exactly what we are sowing. And so I would ask you tonight again. What are you sowing?

And let us remember that the harvest is surely coming. "And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." John Arndt says: "It would be a foolish farmer who would sow and immediately expect a harvest. Thus many a one may say, I have prayed so long and so often and do not see any answer to my prayers. Thou fool! canst thou not wait until the harvest is ripe?"

VI. Make Use of Every Opportunity To Do Good

My last thought I Would leave you this evening is this: Let us make use of every opportunity to do good.

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

Let us do good unto all men. We are to love humanity; we are to love the black and the white; we are to love our neighbors and those that live at the antipodes; we are to love all human beings no difference where they are found. Oh, how little true Christianity there is in the world today. How many people there are that would never help any one unless he belongs to his little circle or clique, or church. We never will live as God wants us to

live, until we are ready to say, Here is a human being that needs help, and God help me to bring that help. And let us not simply help when there is great need. We never will be thoroughly happy until we have our eyes constantly open to watch for opportunities to do some kind act somewhere, every moment. Some people seem to be perfectly satisfied if they can go to bed at night thinking, This morning at 9 o'clock I did some kind act. What did you do at two o'clock? At '5'? Why should a man so limit his life that he is only looking for one moment a day to do some kind act? Why should we let a day pass by and do nothing? I maintain there is not a day of a man's life that he cannot do something to make somebody happy; and I maintain that there isn't an hour in a man's life that he cannot do and say something to do some good somewhere. I think our first desire should be constantly to watch for an opportunity to make the world better by our being in it.

Another practical observation right in harmony with this statement is this: We should be especially careful to help those of our own members, those of our own faith, those of our own church. "Especially unto them who are of the household of faith." I think the Apostle Paul had here in mind first of all the true Christians. Help them. If that was true in Paul's day it is just as true today. We should give special help to members of our own church. I wonder whether we keep that in mind as much as we should? If we have carpenter work to do, why don't we give that work to our carpenters? When we want to spread the truth as we believe we should, we expect our carpenters to help. When we want to do some good work in the church, we expect our farmers to help; we expect our retail men to help, no difference what their business may be. Why should we not, as Christian people, patronize those very ones whom we expect to help and whom we expect to help us? I fear we are overlooking that Christian principle too much. We some times pass right by our own people and go to those who are not one with us as far as faith is concerned; we never expect their aid in a financial way, and yet at the same time we overlook our own people who are expected to help us. One of the very first principles of Christianity is this: See to your own home; see to your own people; but do not stop there; go on out and do good as you have opportunity, to all mankind.

May the Lord bless these words tonight and help us all to put into practice the things we hear. If there is any one thing I would wish for it is this, 'that we might not come to these Sunday evening services simply as a

matter of custom, simply as a place to go, and sit down and listen and talk, and go home again. Let us by all means make up our minds that we want to hear God's Word to get bread for our souls; something that we may live by tomorrow and all the rest of our lives. And until you have your mind fully made up: I want to learn the truth that I may live it, it seems to me it is a waste of time for you to hear the truth. The very object in hearing it ought to be that you may take it home to your soul and live it before the whole world. May God bless these practical principles to our eternal good is my prayer. Amen.

51. Paul's Great Prayer.

Sixteenth Sunday After Trinity.

Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. Eph. 3:13-21.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THIS EPISTLE HAS BEEN CALLED "Paul's Lord's Prayer." It is one of the great prayers offered by that greatest of all apostles. How few real genuine prayers there are in this World. There are eight millions of heathen that never prayed a single prayer, according to God's idea of prayer; seven millions of Jews who never offered a single prayer in the name of Jesus; and how many professed Christians there are who have only formal prayers. Sometimes it is said we should not pray out of books because we are formal, and yet there are some people that never pray out of a book and they are just as formal as any book could possibly be. How few people there are with a life that means to do all that it can to carry that prayer into practical effect. Paul's prayer is an ideal prayer; it is one of the great prayers, and may the Holy Spirit help us to get the wider horizon, the wider vision, of a truly great prayer. My theme, therefore, will be:

Paul's Great Prayer

And in order that we ourselves may be led to pray as he did, let me show you:

- I. What he saw.
- II. What he said.

I. What He Saw

Let us not forget that Paul at this time was a prisoner in the great city of Rome. No one has been able to describe that prison, but the very fact that we are reminded of the house in which the criminals were placed in the greatest city of the greatest government that was then on earth, clearly shows us that Paul many a morning saw the walls of one of the greatest prisons in the world.

He not only saw the walls of a great prison, but he saw a great congregation discouraged. He had himself established a congregation up in the city of Ephesus. He had there made known unto them the great Words of Jesus Christ, and heathen became Christians, and true Christians. Paul says of them: “Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.” It was no ordinary congregation up there at Ephesus; it was an old established mission, one that he dearly loved, and yet when they heard that their former pastor Paul was now a prisoner in Rome, they became very much discouraged and wondered what would become of the church in the coasts of Asia Minor; and so Paul, through those prison walls, saw his little discouraged congregation up at Ephesus.

He not only saw that congregation, but he saw a lost world that needed to be saved. In the beginning of this chapter he recognizes the great fact that he was the apostle sent by God to convert the heathen, “Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel: whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of His power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach

among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” In other words, the apostle Paul recognizes the fact that he sees that he, a prisoner, now in the great prison of Rome, is not only surrounded by the walls of this prison, that he not only can see up in yonder distance a little discouraged congregation, but that all around the world there are millions and millions of souls living in darkness, whose very light depends upon his sending forth the light from that dark dungeon.

My dear friends, it is hard for us to imagine this morning the world as it was that day when Paul wrote this lesson. If you can imagine only a few hundred or a few thousand Christians in all the world, darkness surrounding every nation, then you will understand what it meant for Paul to be in prison that morning. Then you will understand how he felt when he looked out of those little windows and saw this great, great world, in darkness, perishing by the thousands every day, and no man to bring them the Gospel, and the one selected by God to do this, tied in chains.

He not only saw a great world lost, to be saved, but he saw a great prayer-commanding and prayer-answering Father in heaven. “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Again he says: “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church.” In other words, he recognized the fact that though he was little Paul in that prison, that there is a true and living God, and that the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, since Christ adopted him, was his Father, and recognizing that his Father could be the Father of every lost man, recognizing that by human might it was impossible for a man in prison to enlighten the world, he also recognized the fact that there was one who could not be imprisoned, that there was a God who could not be demolished by the power of man; he recognized that among all the unknown and false gods which he had seen with his own eyes and touched with his own hands, there is One who has the power to do all things; One who not only listens to the prayers of prisoners, but who can do more than the greatest prisoner in the world can even think it possible for him to do, and that the work will be done, despite the fact that the stone walls surround him in the greatest city of the greatest government of the world.

He not only saw a great Father in heaven, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, but he also saw a great family. “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole

family in heaven and earth is named.” Paul’s vision of the family was far broader than our vision. Some of us think only of the few people that eat at our table as belonging to our family; then there are some people again who think only of those, that are living Christians as belonging to their family; but the apostle Paul allowed himself that morning to take a wider view. He not only thought of himself as a prisoner, but he thought of the prophets of old that had been stoned to death, and torn asunder, some of whom were sleeping under the ground, others burned and the ashes scattered to the winds; he thought of the millions and millions of those already dead, like Abraham of old, who had faith in the coming of the Savior, and were sleeping under the ground; he thought of the souls that had gone home into the presence of the Father in heaven, the saints on high; he thought of those that should be born thereafter; he thought of the funerals that should be held from the day that he dies until the last great trump shall sound and Christ shall come to raise the dead; he thought of all those that are under the ground; he thought of all those that are on the ground; he thought of all those that should be born, and he said, after all there is only one family; God has a family; part of them are in heaven and part on earth, but God’s family is known by one link, they all cling to the Lord Jesus Christ, His only Son, and they are named after Him, and the Christian is not known by the name of Smith, nor Jones, nor Lutheran, nor Presbyterian, nor Methodist, but by the fact that he is a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore, like Luther of old, he does not care whether his church is called by this name or that, but we shall be called followers of Him who is our only Savior, and whoever accepts Jesus as His only Savior and is baptized in His name, has the covenant and the promise that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he belongs to God’s family, and so Paul saw that morning not only Christ, and the saved that are dead and the saved that shall die, but he saw them all on high, and everywhere, and they are all one great family of God.

He saw another vision in that prison that was great, too, and that is, he saw a great hidden man. He speaks of him in the sixteenth verse: “That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.” Paul never asked the question. What is a man worth? He never asked, How famous is a man; how much does he possess; on which street does he live; the only question in Paul’s mind was. Is he a man? and if he is a man he has a soul in him, and that

soul in him is capable of being born again; and if that soul is born again by the Holy Spirit, then he has got that man such as I, Paul, in this prison, have got another man in me; and as I have another man within me, so every man up at Ephesus has another man in him, and every lost heathen man in the world has got the possibility of another man in him, and so all over this world, a man within a man, and this inner man is the one whom the Holy Spirit can make so powerful that the world cannot resist him. I see in that inner man a heart that can swell out with faith until it can comprehend all prisons, and comprehend all nations, and all worlds, and even God Himself. It is possible, says Paul, for this inner man to have his heart swell up so big that God can live in it. A wonderful vision. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend all the incomprehensible. The Bible at times seems to be full of paradoxes. In this same lesson he tells us about a love that no man can understand. "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." And in spite of the fact that this love passeth all knowledge, he says, "That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend." How can you comprehend a thing you cannot know? It is the inner man that can do this. The inner man, as I said a moment ago, when he has his brain sanctified by the Holy Spirit, begins to take that brain of his and he sinks it down into the very ground of God's Word until it is perfectly saturated with God's eternal truth, and then the truth and the brain of man become one, as it were, and the heart of man and the brain of man, and the whole inner man becomes, as it were, a very part of God's love, and of God's knowledge, and of God's fullness, and where God's love is His brain is, and where God's love is his heart is, and where God's heart is His power is, and God is all in all in him and he in God, as the vine is in the branch and the branch throws its power into the vine, so we are one in Christ Jesus. Wonderful vision of Paul in prison! And all this he saw before he prayed.

He not only saw the great hidden man, but he saw the path of glory. These poor Christians up here in Ephesus were heart-broken, fainting, discouraged; they were writing letters and sending messages down to Rome: Paul, what will we do? If our pastor is in prison in the capital of Rome, what will become of the little church up in the capital of Ephesus? And so discouraged and fainthearted were they that the apostle said to them, I must encourage you. Haven't you a path to glory? Instead of your

suffering on account of my being here in prison, I want you to understand this is going to be your greatest help. “Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.” Again: “Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end,” Why, says Paul, you have got no right to faint; you have no right to be discouraged; if I can see through these prison walls a path to glory, with all my suffering, you ought to be encouraged up there when you are free; if I can be happy down here with these chains on my hands, you ought to be happy with the chains off of your hands; if I can bring my little church into this prison and have it here, cannot you, my Ephesus brethren, keep up your church up there? I see a path to glory, no difference what these people do to me; I know that I must suffer, so did Christ my Master. I know that my path runs through the Church of God. There is a glorious path and I see it, and seeing all this, I Paul, bow my knees before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I now pray: O Christ, may we have the vision of Paul this evening that we may pray as he did. Now I did not hear that prayer, but I can easily gather from this lesson the substance of Paul’s prayer.

II. What He Said

He said in that prayer that day, first. They can hurt me, but not my church. Let us not forget that it was no little matter for a man like Paul, with his education, with his powders, to be tied down into a little cell of a dark dungeon; but with all that Paul gave them to understand that his church was an eternal church, and that they could never take him out of that. No difference how much they might hurt him, they never could harm the church that Christ bought with His blood.

“Unto Him be glory in the church, by Jesus Christ throughout all ages, world without end.”

When Paul and Silas were put into another prison and their feet were fastened into the stocks, at midnight I can hear Paul say, Silas, where two or three are gathered together in Christ’s name He is in the midst of them. Let us have a service. And they started out to sing, and there never was a grander church in all the world than Paul and Silas’ church when their feet were in the stocks. Their backs were bleeding, the blood was running down

on the floor where they sat, but they sang, and there never was a grander choir in all the world than that duet that Paul and Silas sang that night. And so Paul says, They put me into this prison; it is dark, but my church is here and they cannot hurt my church. They may kill me, Paul, and they have killed Christ, but the very killing of Christ has founded the church on which I stand, and the very taking off of my head will inspire thousands of men to do what I never could have done. My church lives and it never can be harmed. The Savior said. Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock will I build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. In other words, Paul prayed in his church. The house of God is a house of prayer. How many people there are in these days who seem to think that they can be Christians even if they are not prisoners, outside of the church, I want to say right here that if one man can be saved without being a member of God's church, then we of all men on earth are the biggest fools. If one man can be saved outside of God's church, why cannot all the rest of them be saved the same way? Paul recognized the fact that he was no fool for being in prison; he would rather die than be thrust out of the church of God. It must stand. Once in a while we meet people who seem to think. Well, if I do not like somebody in the church council, or if I do not like the superintendent of the Sunday School, or if I do not like the pastor, I will just leave the church. Well, my dear friends, whenever you leave for that reason, there is absolutely no Christian lost; there is left a soul in darkness just the same as it was before. A man that is a true child of God will not leave the church of God for any man on earth. Never. You do not go to church to join men; you do not go to church because somebody is in it, or because somebody is out of it; you go to the church of God because Christ is the church, and because you cling to Christ no difference what happens, and will be faithful to Him until you die; and you cannot pray if you are not willing to go into the church of God to do your praying.

The apostle Paul also said: They can put these limbs into prison, but they cannot keep them from bending. There are some things they can do with us and some things they cannot do with us. The apostle Paul was too small a man to fight the government of Rome; he was too small a man to say, I can physically keep out of prison. He went into the door where they said he should walk; he went into the cell where they said he should stay. He recognized the fact that his limbs could be placed in that cell, and even into the stocks, and they could be liberated, but there is one thing, says Paul, I

do not care what you do with me, you cannot hinder; as long as I have got the power to stand I have got the power to bend my knees, and down I go, and bow before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, what a beautiful form of true humiliation, to kneel before God in prayer! “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” – Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints! I go down, my knees bend, I must pray to my Father in heaven, and all Rome cannot keep my knees from bending.

In the third place Paul said. They can chain these hands, but they cannot keep me from writing. He tells us explicitly in some of these epistles of his, I write these with my own hands. He tells us in that great speech that he made before the king, that I would that ye might be as I am, except these chains. Oh, how many people in this world will let every little thing hinder them from performing their duties to their God. If some neighbor comes in at nine o'clock they will sit down and not come to Sunday School. If somebody wants to come and make a little call, you will sit down there and not do your duty. If you have done a little hard work on Saturday, then you are too sleepy on Sunday morning. Oh, may the day come when all the merchants of this city will learn the one great lesson that they can sell just as much merchandise in ten hours as in fifteen. Oh, may the day soon come when the devil will lose that power among business men, that he can keep all our clerks up until nearly midnight and wear them out before the day comes when they can go to God's house and listen; but I want to say right here for the encouragement of all tired people, in all the discouragements you meet with, if Paul could bend the knee in prison and would not be hindered in writing with a chain on his hands, isn't it time that we overcome difficulties? We talk about a land of liberty, but the great fact is that any man that will let anything hinder him from doing his duty is a slave to the thing that holds him down. And many people are slaves because they want to be. I know there are chains too strong for us to break, but there are few chains so big that we cannot rattle them. There are chains that are too strong for us to get loose, but there are few chains too heavy that we cannot hold up a pen and write a word that will live when the chain has gone to dust. And so I urge upon us all to learn of Paul how to pray. They can chain these hands, but they cannot keep me from writing.

I can see Paul that morning as he bows his knees before the Father and says: O Father in heaven, great is the government of Rome; it has placed me

into this prison, and by my own power I cannot get out. Father in heaven, I know that Thou art greater – greater than I can conceive; and Thou wilt answer prayer, far better than I have ever dreamed. Now unto Thee that art able to do exceeding abundantly above all that I can ask or think. Thou art greater than Rome, and if it be Thy will, O Father, as Thou didst once shake the prison and release Silas and me, if it be Thy will. Thou canst make me free. My government is great, but my God, Thou art greater. That was Paul's prayer that morning.

In the fifth place: They have put me into a family of criminals, but I belong to God's family. As they led Jesus Christ between two criminals on Calvary's hill in order that they might make it appear before the world that He, too, was a criminal, so they took this great apostle and compelled him to eat and to drink with the great criminals in the prison at Rome. But Paul said in his prayer, My Father, I do not belong to this family; Thou hast a family of saints on high, and Thou hast a family of Christians up at Ephesus; Thou hast Christians over at Jerusalem; Thou hast children of God all over this country, and there are going to be more; this family is going to grow and is going to become very large; and I thank Thee, my Father in heaven, that I belong to Thy family.

Again, he said: They can handle this little man, but not my inner man. He recognized not only that there was an inner man in the Christian outside of prison, but that there was an inner man in himself. He said to himself, They call me little Paul; they think that I am unusually small, and they call me an ugly little Jew; but I want, O Father in heaven, the power of Thy Spirit in my soul until this might shall shake Rome. O Father in heaven, I realize that I am a little man, but I have a faith in my Savior now that Swells out so large that He can dwell in my heart by faith. O Father in heaven, I realize that in this head of mine there is a small brain, but there is power in this brain of mine to flash to the ends of the earth, and I am thinking of the height, and the depth, and of the breadth of the great love of God; I am thinking this morning of the fact that Thy love is longer than the history of the world; deeper than the gates of hell; higher than the throne of heaven. O, my Father in heaven, I am strong in Thee!

Finally: They think they are keeping me out of the mission field a few years, but I shall never leave it until the end of the world. Paul's prayer was a wonderful prayer. The people up at Ephesus thought the church is going down because their leader is in prison. Paul did not think so. Paul knew

very well that those prophets of old that were stoned to death were not dead. Paul knew very well that anything that is not worth dying for is not worth having. Paul knew that if he were living he could only go around in a few of these different nations and tell the story of Christ, and then lie down and die, and that would be the end of it. He knew further that if God in His infinite wisdom saw fit, that some day this little apostle should be led out, led to the block, his neck made bare and the knife placed over him to come down and cut that head off, that the angels of God might be there to put the crown on it. He knew very well that if he had to spill his blood in this cause, that the blood, would talk louder and longer than all the words that fell from his tongue. He knew that if he would die for Christ that the spirit of Paul would animate every missionary that goes out into the field as long as the world shall stand.

And Paul was not mistaken. He prayed that morning that you might have his spirit, that his work shall go on until the ends of the earth. My dear friends, where can you find a mission field today without the spirit of Paul in it? Where can you find a genuine prayer today that has not got the prayer of Paul in it? Are we praying as we should? Are we praying for missions? I am afraid, my friends, as I said in the beginning, some of our prayers, are never heard. When a man prays God to save the world and then reaches into his pocket and gives about the wages of half a day in a year to save souls, I do not think that prayer ever goes above his scalp. I do not think that God ever pays any attention to it. When a man prays for the salvation of the world and is a stingy idolater, God pays no more attention to him than He does to yonder stone that lies in the street. When a man prays for missions and lets his own children grow up as children of the devil, I do not think God ever listens to him. Paul's prayer had in it this thought: My God, there is not a place on earth I am not willing to run if Thou wilt let me out of this prison. . My God, there is not a work that I am not willing to do, and earn my own living, if Thou wilt only let me preach Christ to a dying world. My God, since I am in this prison and cannot get out, if it will do any good cut my head off, and write with my blood instead of with ink, the mighty message to the world, that will inspire people to pray for missions.

I am glad to say that these plain simple sermons, preached by an humble Christian, are having their effect. I am glad to announce this morning that there is at least one member in this church who from this day on is going to support a missionary himself in foreign fields; and I do hope that the day

will come when we will not go home and figure out \$1.33 for ten causes, but I hope the day will come when every man will go home and say, How much do I need to feed my family; how much do I need to clothe my family; how much do I need to support my church; how much do I need to pay my taxes; how much do I need to lay up that I may not be a pauper when I am old; what can I spare; what can I give for God; what can I give for the salvation of souls? If it is fifty dollars, then fifty dollars; if it is fifty cents, fifty cents I will give; if it is five dollars, five dollars I will give; if it is a thousand, a thousand I will give; and if Thou wilt take my life, here it is, my God. Then, my friends, when you go to doing business that way with God, then I believe that God will say. Angels, listen; there is a man down there praying.

When Paul was converted and God told Ananias to hunt him up. He knew what Ananias was hunting; He knew that there was something over there called a man, in the street called Straight, that was worth hunting, for Behold! He prayeth. Why did God tell Ananias to hunt Paul? Because he knew that the day would come when Paul would hunt God and say, Here, God, I am; take my life to save the world. That prayer was worth listening to; and may we pray from this day on so that our prayers are accompanied by a life and a determination to give our whole bodies and souls to His service, so that we will be heard. And until we are willing to give and to do as God wants us to do, let us have the respect before the throne of God to keep our mouths shut and not pray at all. This is plain talk but it is true Christianity, and may God move us to have the right missionary spirit to live and see what Paul saw, and to pray as Paul prayed. Then we, too, shall sometime see the great path of glory. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the great message of the morning, and we pray Thee that this message will inspire us with the spirit of an apostle Paul to have the wider vision of the world, the wider vision of the lost souls of the world, the wider vision of the permanency of the church of God, the wider vision of the greatness of our Father in heaven. O Lord our God, do Thou help us this evening to pray as he prayed; do Thou help us to see that all prayers to be effectual, must be honest with our own

consciences, honest with our own souls, honest before God and in harmony with His Word. And we pray Thee this evening that Thou wilt give a spiritual blessing to this whole congregation. May the Missionary Society already existing have such an influence on every mother, and every woman, and every man and every child that we may be one great missionary society to proclaim salvation through Christ to a dying world. And now we ask Thee to go with us to our respective homes, and may our life's prayer be in substance the one taught by our Holy Savior Jesus Christ: Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

52. The One Baptism.

Seventeenth Sunday After Trinity.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism. Eph. 4:5.

Beloved in Christ:

MUCH HAS BEEN SAID recently in this city on the mode and subject of baptism. If those churches which believe only in immersion and adult baptism are in the right, then God have mercy on over ninety per cent, of all professed Christians. There is no question in the Christian Church as to who this one Lord is – described in the following verse in these words:

“One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

This one Lord is the same God who said in the first chapter of Genesis, “Let us make man in our image”; the same God whom the angels praised by singing three times, “Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, Lord God of Sabaoth”; the same Triune God who manifested Himself when Christ was baptized in the river Jordan, and the Father said from heaven, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”; and the Holy Spirit came down on Him in the form of a dove; the same God in whose name Jesus commanded the disciples to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The one faith is the faith given by the Holy Spirit in the Christ that died on Calvary, whose Father is our Father. The one Lord, the one faith and the one baptism, is the central doctrine of the Christian Church. What is:

The One Baptism

Spoken of in our text? I answer:

- I. It is not simply immersion.
- II. It is not simply for adults.

I. The Immersionists

The immersionists claim that no one has a right to the name of Christian who has not been immersed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and consequently their claim is not only great, but they deem their mission great. They consider it their holy duty to step into the folds of other churches, where people think they are baptized, and compel them to go under the water. It is our mission to instruct them and show them that baptism does not necessarily imply immersion.

1. The Unquestionable Immersions In The Bible Were Not Baptisms

The unquestionable immersions of the Bible were not baptisms. If immersion in itself were a baptism, then those were baptized who died in the flood, who were drowned in the Red Sea; then the axe that sank in the waters of the Jordan was baptized; then Jonah, who was swallowed by the large fish, and the swine that ran into the sea, possessed of devils, must all have been baptized.

When Adam and Eve were created, then the whole world knew the true and living God. There were no ignorant heathen then, but soon the people made the same mistake they are making today. Christian men married heathen women. The result was that the heathen won the victory and the people forgot their God. One hundred and twenty years God gave them to repent. He told the only righteous man, Noah, to build an ark, and to give them a warning which they did not heed. At last the ark was finished; two by two, and seven by seven of all the animals that could not live in the water, were placed in that ark; four men and their wives also entered; then the rain began to fall; the valleys were covered, the hills, the mountains, the highest trees, every high point in the world was covered by more than fifteen cubits of water. One by one the whole world was immersed; a year

and ten days before the waters were dried up; little children, old and young, large and small, could have been seen lying over the world, dead. They were all immersed, but not baptized.

You know the story of Israel in Egypt, how for four hundred and thirty years they multiplied until there were six hundred thousand men who could carry arms, besides women and children. You know how they were made slaves until God sent Moses to deliver them. You know the story of the ten plagues, and how on that last night when they ate the paschal lamb, they started for the Red Sea. You know how Pharaoh refused time and again to let them go, and finally followed them with six hundred chosen chariots, besides others. Moses and the children of Israel reached the Red Sea; the enemy was behind them; they could not go to the right nor to the left; there was nothing else to do but to march forward. God told Moses to strike the waters with his staff; they divided, and the children of Israel crossed over on dry land; they sang a song of victory when the waters returned and Pharaoh and his host were all drowned. They were immersed, but not baptized.

You know the story of the sons of the prophets who invited Elisha to go with them down to the river Jordan to build a little temple there; they took an axe with them and began to cut down a tree; the axe slipped off and fell into the water; the one who lost it exclaimed, "Alas, my axe! it was borrowed." Elisha threw in a stick and made the axe to swim; it came to the top of the water. It was immersed, but surely not baptized.

You know the story of the prophet Jonah, whom God sent to Nineveh to preach repentance to that great city. Instead of going to Nineveh as commanded by his God, he started down to Joppa, bought a ticket and started for Tarshish on a heathen vessel. They had not gone very far out into the sea until the storms came, until the very keel seemed to plow the bottom of the ocean, and the masts seemed to pierce the clouds. It was discovered that there was something unusual about this storm. Lots were cast to find out who was the cause. At last they find Jonah asleep; they wake him up; his own conscience tells him that he is the cause; he confesses that he is a Hebrew and deserves death, and they resolve to throw him out. Out into the sea they pitch him, and he is swallowed by a large fish which God prepared especially for him. They tell us that this is an old fable; they tell us it is impossible that Jonah should have lived three days in the bowels of that large fish, forgetting that we have lived a more miraculous life than that

ourselves. Let us not forget that Jesus said as Jonah was three days in the bowels of the fish, so he would sleep three days in the bowels of the earth. If there was no such man as Jonah, if he was not in the large fish down in the sea, then there was no Savior, and the Savior was not dead, and did not rise from the dead. Then let us not forget to hold fast to every word of God. Jonah was there immersed, but who would say he was baptized?

You know the story of Christ in the storm on the Sea of Galilee. When He crossed over that sea He met the Gadarene who was possessed with devils; even iron bands could not hold him. The very devils exclaimed, "Let us flee into those swine." It was wrong for the Jews to raise swine. God had a perfect right to take them from them, and so He permitted the devils to enter into the swine, and the swine plunged down into the sea. They all drowned; no man will deny that they were immersed, but who would say that they were baptized?

It must be evident from what has now been said that there must be a vast difference between immersion and baptism, and that the unquestionable immersions of the Holy Word of God are not baptisms.

2. Immersion Is Not Just Going In The Water And Coming Out Again

It is not necessarily immersion to go into the water and come out again. Much stress has been laid by immersionists on the word '*baptizo*,' which is an intense form of '*bapto*.' They tell us that this word means to dip, to immerse, to plunge, and consequently that baptize means immersion. No Bible scholar or Greek scholar will deny that '*baptizo*' originally meant immersion, but we do deny that this word has only one meaning. Suppose in two thousand years from now some one should pick up an English book, and this language were a dead language; suppose he should look into an English dictionary and find the word 'spring'; this word originally meant to leap. Suppose he reads this sentence: "I have found a spring in my watch," would it be correct then to translate the sentence, "I have found a leap in my watch"? Suppose he found another sentence, "The flowers bloom in the spring," would he translate the sentence, "The flowers bloom in the leap"? The word has another meaning – 'fountain'. Would it be correct to say, when he looked into his watch, that he had broke the fountain? When we look up the word 'spring' in the latest English dictionary, we find it has now

fifteen distinctive meanings; there was a time when it had only one. How shall we know the correct meaning of the word 'baptize'? Surely by the use of that word in the Greek translations of the Old Testament, and the original of the New. Let us look at some examples in the Word of God in which there seems to be no doubt in the minds of some people' but that they were immersed.

I refer first of all to the Syrian captain, Naaman, who was afflicted with leprosy. A Jewish maiden referred him to the great prophet Elisha, telling him that if the great prophet could see him he would surely cure him. Naaman started out to see Elisha; he expected to meet him personally, and, as he says in his own words, he expected that prophet "to strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper," showing plainly that he was not leprous all over his body, but only in a certain part. He was disappointed; instead of seeing Naaman, a messenger met him at the gate and told him to go down to the river Jordan and wash himself in that river seven times. The angry captain rebelled against such an act, and referred to the two rivers near Damascus, which were just as good as the river Jordan; but his servant asked him if he would have objected to doing a hard thing, if not, why not do such an easy thing as to go down to the Jordan and wash himself seven times. We are told that Naaman went down and dipped himself into that river according to the word of the man of God. I call your attention to this truth, that Elisha never said he should go and immerse himself, but rather that he should wash himself, and this he did, according to the command, seven times. There is no proof that Naaman was immersed, yet he was baptized, according to the language of the Septuagint. The Septuagint is a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, made two hundred and eighty-five years before Christ, by seventy translators, hence its name.

Another character, the greatest character in all history, is claimed to have been immersed. I refer to Jesus Christ Himself. We read in Matt. 3:16:

"And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water, and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and resting upon Him."

It is claimed that these words distinctly teach that Jesus Christ was immersed when He was baptized. Let me call your attention to the statement, that "when He was baptized He went up straightway out of the

water”; in other words, the coming out of the water had absolutely nothing to do with His baptism; the baptism was completed before there is anything said about whether He stayed in the water or came out. But who knows that Jesus Christ was under the water? In two hours from now I could drive a team of horses to a river where I went bathing many a time in my boyhood days; there was seldom a week that we did not go into the Mohican river, and when we were done bathing we came up straightway out of the water and went home. Only once do I remember of having been put under the water; the other days I kept my head above the water, and yet we always went straightway out of the water. How else could one do, after going into the water, but to come up out of the water? If your little son were playing in a stream only half a foot deep, how would you call him out? Surely you would say, “Come up out of that water.” Does that mean he was under the water? Not at all. But we are told by scholars that the Greek ‘*eis*’ means to go into, and ‘*ek*’ means to come out of, and that, therefore, it could be nothing else but an immersion. Strange that ‘*eis*’ should always mean into, when in the 11th chapter of John we read that Mary fell down at the feet of Jesus – in the Greek ‘*eis*’. If it is true that ‘*eis*’ means only to go into, or fall into, then Mary actually fell into the feet of Jesus. Either Jesus must have had very large feet, or Mary must have been very, very small. Any one who is unprejudiced can see that those who hold only to immersion are straining every nerve to bring about an immersion whether there was one or not. The only painting of the fourth century extant, pictures John standing on a rock baptizing Jesus with a little shell. No difference whether He was immersed, or sprinkled, or the water was poured on Him, He was in the water, and there is not one word which would prove that John was in it.

Let us look for a moment at another proof for immersion. They tell us that when Philip baptized the eunuch that surely the eunuch was immersed. How do we know that he was? They were passing through a desert. Water was scarce enough that Philip did not see the water until the eunuch called his attention to it. They stepped out of the chariot; the Bible tells us distinctly they both went into the water, and when the eunuch was baptized they both came up out of the water. Now the immersionists must admit one of two things, either that the eunuch was not under the water, or that Philip was under when he baptized the eunuch. What is said of one is said of the other; but whoever saw an immersionist minister get under the water to immerse another?

It seems to me that John ought to know how he baptized. When the commission was sent to him to give an account of himself, he exclaimed, “I baptize with water” – he did not say, “I immerse,” but ‘*en*’ with a substantive always shows the instrument that is used, and consequently the only conclusion we can draw is this, that water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is a baptism, whether in the river Jordan, or up in the jail, or by the many springs at Enon.

3. Many Were Baptized Who Were Never Immersed

The same Septuagint referred to before, tells us plainly in Leviticus 14:1-6 what the law of the leper was in the day of his cleansing. He shall be brought unto the priest, and the priest shall go forth out of the camp and shall examine him. Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet and hyssop; and the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird into the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water. Notice well, the English Bible gives the word ‘dip’ where the Septuagint uses the word ‘baptize.’ Now in the name of common sense, how could one little bird – literally a sparrow – shed enough blood to immerse the other bird in it, together with the cedar wood, and the scarlet and the hyssop? Suppose you should give a Campbellite preacher two chickens for a present, and tell him to cut the head off of one and let it bleed into a vessel, and then immerse the other chicken into the blood; could he do it? Just as well as this one little bird could be immersed into the blood of the other. In order to meet this argument, the immersionists have tried to make us believe that the little bird was dipped into the running water. What will they not do to carry out their own ideas instead of sticking strictly to God’s Word!

You know the familiar story of Nebuchadnezzar, who had a wonderful dream of a tree whose branches spread out over the world and reached to the skies. To make a long story short, this tree, which became barren, was a representative of Nebuchadnezzar, who was to lose his mind and walk out into the fields, and eat grass like an ox. We are told in Daniel 4:33, in the English Bible, that his body was wet with the dew of heaven. The Greek

translation tells us that he was baptized with the dew of heaven. We must either imagine dew drops seven feet in diameter, into which Nebuchadnezzar could plunge or immerse himself, or we must imagine him to be about half as large as a common pea, to be immersed in a good-sized dew drop. If 'baptize' means only to plunge or immerse, then the sentence in the Bible, "John the Baptist baptized in the wilderness," Would literally mean that John the plunger plunged into the wilderness.

In Mark 7:4 we are told that it was the tradition of the elders that when they come from the market except they wash they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables, or, as stated in the margin, beds. Now the Greek Testament tells us distinctly that before they ate they baptized their cups and pots and brazen vessels and beds. If baptized means only to immerse, then it was their custom to immerse their beds before each meal, surely a custom that we would not want at present.

In the 16th chapter of Acts we read of Paul and Silas praying and singing at midnight; that a sudden earthquake shook the foundation of the prison, and all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed; that the keeper of the prison was about to commit suicide, when Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here"; then he called for a light and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, saying, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul instructed them in the Word of God, and the inspired Truth says, "He took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes and was baptized, he and all his straightway." It takes quite a stretch of imagination to see a river running through the jail, and Paul plunging them into that water the same hour of the night.

For the sake of argument it is sometimes claimed that the very reason John baptized along the river Jordan was because there was plenty of water there to immerse. If that were true, why did not the day of Pentecost occur down along the river Jordan instead of in the upper room where there was no water? If the multitudes had to be immersed down along the river, why did the three thousand on the day of Pentecost not receive their baptism down at the Jordan? Surely it takes quite a stretch of the imagination, and a digging of many pools and cisterns to satisfy the mind of the immersionist with regard to the baptism of the people of Jerusalem.

How about Paul – was he immersed? If there is any one verse that immersionists think they have a patent right on, it is Romans 6:4, “Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” They lay the whole stress on the word ‘hurled’ forgetting other words in the same verse. This verse does not say we are buried with Him in baptism; it does not say that Jesus Christ was buried in the river Jordan. Either Jesus Christ was buried in the river Jordan and drowned there, or our burial in Him does not refer to the form of baptism, for we are told here that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead, not from the water, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. When we were baptized by sprinkling, as little infants, we received the benefits of the death of Jesus Christ, His atonement, and as He was buried, not in the Jordan, but in the sepulchre, and arose again from the dead, so we, by our covenant, should each day rise in newness of life. Was Paul immersed? That is the question. It seems to me he ought to know. In Acts 22, he tells us how he was baptized. He tells us that one Ananias, “a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me. Brother Saul, receive thy sight, and the same hour I looked up at him. And he said,” “The God of our Fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” If this last verse says anything, it does say that Paul stood up when he was to be baptized; it does not say that they went to any river, or that he was under the water, but we do find here, as in many other passages of Scripture, the real meaning of the word *baptizo* in New Testament times; it meant to purify; to cleanse; and with that meaning it will fit anywhere in God’s Holy Word. It makes no difference then whether they baptized down at the river Jordan, or up in the jail, or at Enon, no difference where they found water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, they could have a baptism.

It does seem strange that in this world of colleges and universities, where the leading schools all teach infant baptism, and the mode of sprinkling, that all these professors should never have discovered the real meaning of *baptizo*. Did Dr. Luther, who translated the Bible into German,

not know what *baptizo* meant? Did Melanchthon not know? Do the ninety per cent, of all professed Christians in the world, know nothing about the meaning of this word? Suppose *baptizo* did mean to immerse; to dip; to plunge; if God saw fit to put into that word the meaning of purify, shall we object to it? Did not God promise the Holy Spirit to those that were baptized? Shall we say that all the great men of God during the Reformation, filled with the Holy Spirit, were not Christians? Shall we say that the great Reformation was fought by men that were not baptized at all? Did it take thousands of years to find out that one must be plunged under the water to be baptized? Is it the water, or is it the Word, the Holy Spirit, who regenerates? Let us then not forget that immersion, while it is a baptism, is not the only form of baptism, and when it is claimed that we must be immersed or we are not baptized, we simply will not yield to that kind of tyranny. The one baptism is not one with regard to the quantity of water, but it is water, in large quantities or small, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and Holy Ghost.

II. Babies One Day Old

The one baptism does not exclude the babe one day old. We have heard of the form of baptism. The next question which presents itself is this: Who may be baptized? There are two kinds of inconsistent Christians. There are some who profess to believe that the immersion of the adult believer is the only correct form of baptism, and at the same time three little infants of such families have been brought to me during the past year to be baptized. Now if infants are not subjects to baptize, surely those parents are inconsistent to bring them to a Lutheran pastor to have them baptized. If infant baptism is Scriptural, then the Campbellite church is not the Christian Church. If infant baptism is not Scriptural, then the Lutherans have no right to call their church the Christian Church. There are Lutherans just as inconsistent as the Campbellites. The Lutheran Church believes in infant baptism, and yet there are Lutheran parents – so called – who do not have their children baptized. If infant baptism is at all Scriptural, there is no reason why a child should not be baptized as soon as possible after it is born. I believe in infant baptism, and so thoroughly so that I have vowed long ago that if the Lord should give me another child or children, I would

baptize them just as soon as they can be taken to the altar. In order to bring the truth home to you this evening which I have in mind, I shall give you six reasons why I should baptize my children, hereafter, as soon as possible.

1. Children Must Be Born Again To Enter Heaven

Because these children must be born again before they can enter heaven. I have no dispute with people who will argue against this truth; it is a dispute between them and their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. If ever the Savior stated a truth plainly. He did when He stated the necessity of the new birth. In John 3:3 He states that except man – *τις*, in Greek, a human being – be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. We are not here to explain the mysteries of God, nor to say why God said this or that, but as Christian people we believe that God knows best what heaven is and what we are, and what must be done with the human race before it can enter heaven. One who pretends to be very smart, said to me during the past week, “If a child should be born in a potato patch, would that make the child a potato?” This: may seem like a smart saying, but it is far from stating the truth which we have stated when we quote the new birth as given by Christ. We are not sinners because we are born into a sinful world, but because we are born of sinful parents. Jesus said, “That which is born of flesh is flesh.” He did not say, The flesh that is born into the world is flesh. If we were born of a potato, we would be a potato, whether born in the patch or somewhere else, and thus we are all born in sin because we are born of sinful beings. My little child a day old cannot be anything else but born in sin. Paul would say of that child that he is by nature a child of wrath. God would say, how can a clean thing come out of that which is unclean? There is none good, no, not one. Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. This is the first reason I would have for having my child baptized as soon as possible. No sin shall enter heaven.

2. God Wants All Baptized Who Enter Heaven

The last command that Christ gave to His disciples before His ascension was this, “Go ye into all the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Notice well that the Lord Jesus drew no line between infants and

adults, or between those of accountability, and those who have not yet reached that age. All the human beings in the world belong to the nations of the world. All are born in sin. The Savior died for all, and baptism is one of the means of grace which will apply to all who can enter heaven. We do not believe that the gates of the church should be made narrower than the gates of heaven, nor wider, but that the one should harmonize with the other. Little infants are wanted in heaven. Is baptism holier than heaven itself? Shall God admit them there, and shall they not be admitted to this holy sacrament? When God says do a thing, it is our duty to do it. Notice the means God uses to make disciples. If I say, "Fatten a horse, feeding him corn and oats," I do not mean that he is to be fattened first, and then fed, but it is the feeding of the corn and oats which is to make him fat. Apply the same grammar to the command of Christ, and you understand what He means. "Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them," can mean nothing else than to use this baptism as a means of grace for those that are to be saved. My little child ought to be baptized on the first day for the reason that some children never reach the second day. I have one child in heaven that only lived in this world twenty-five hours. How could I wait two weeks, or twelve years to have that child born of water and the Spirit?

3. Baptism Is The Only Way Of Bringing Infants to Jesus

A third reason why I should have that child baptized soon is because baptism is the only way we have of bringing infants to Jesus. This may seem like a strange assertion, but I shall prove it to you in a few moments. The means of grace are the Word of God and the Holy Sacraments. Through these means the Holy Spirit comes to man. Can we preach the Gospel to a little infant? How can the Word be applied to that child through the preaching service? You all understand that we cannot, therefore, open the door for the Holy Spirit to come to that child directly through the preaching of the Gospel. We cannot even pray that child into the kingdom of heaven. It is true we are taught to pray "Thy kingdom come," but praying "Thy kingdom come," and doing nothing never yet made Christians of heathen. If we could pray people into the kingdom of heaven, it would be time that we call our missionaries home and stop raising money for foreign missions. If we could pray people into the kingdom of heaven, why do we not all stop our paying and working and just pray for God to make the world Christian?

No person was ever prayed into the kingdom of heaven. The Lord Himself said, “The harvest truly is great and the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest;” He did not say. Pray, that the people may come into the harvest, or that the harvest may be reaped without laborers.

The duty of bringing little children to the Savior is felt by all churches. A day has been set apart even by Mr. Dowie to bring the children to him that he may consecrate them to God by prayer. This shows clearly that he feels in his own heart that something must be done for those poor little children, but where in all God’s Word does it say, bring the children to Dowie; or where does it say that in order to pray for them you must bring them to a man? If little children can be prayed into the kingdom of heaven, why cannot Dowie pray them there without bringing them to him; or if prayer alone will save the world, why do people need to go to him to have him pray for them? If we want to pray for people, we can pray for them wherever they are. The Lord Jesus did command us to bring the little children to Him. “Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” Jesus is not in our midst, so that we can see Him personally and lay these infants in His arms as they did when He was here in body, yet He is here and He wants them brought to Him, and the only means He has left us to bring the children actually in connection with the means of grace is holy baptism – water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost can be applied to a little infant just as well as to a hardened sinner. Now, just because my little child a day old cannot understand the Gospel when it is preached, and cannot in that way be brought into the kingdom of God, therefore we will pray for the child, but at the same time bring it as the Savior said, and lay it in His arms in holy baptism, and give it back to Him.

4. Baptism Is A Covenant

Another reason why I should have this child baptized soon, is because baptism is a covenant. When God circumcised Abraham he was seventy-five years old; He could not make him an infant; it is impossible for us to make old sinners infants and baptize them in their infancy; nevertheless God demands that old sinners become like little children before they can be converted, and before they can be baptized. Abraham, seventy-five years of

age, was commanded to bring his children when they were eight days of age, and God made a covenant with them, that thereby they should be members of the church of Israel. That covenant was kept up throughout the history of Israel. Christ Himself, at, the age of eight days, was circumcised, and received the name of Jesus. This was before He was baptized, or before Christian baptism was a custom. Then He instituted holy baptism and commanded the disciples as we have heard, to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, and gave them this great promise, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. There we have the warning and the covenant, and little children come into this covenant just as well as older people.

We hear some one say, How can a little infant believe? Dear friends, faith is a gift of God, as we all acknowledge. No man can believe by his own power. The Bible says that no man can say that Jesus Christ is Lord but by the Holy Ghost. Now, if faith is a gift of God, is it not just as easy for God Almighty to give faith to an innocent little babe as it is to an old hardened sinner? But is it not true that little infants can believe? What is belief? Belief means to trust. How old was your babe when it began to trust you, Oh mother? Do you not know it trusted you the first day? That little babe did not understand all about its surroundings, but it trusted you as well then as it ever did thereafter. The Lord Jesus ought to know whether little infants can believe or not. He took a small child, set it in the midst of the disciples and said, "He that offendeth one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were drowned in the depth of the sea." In other words, if you do not bring your little children to Jesus it were better, says Christ, for you to take a rope and tie one end around your neck, and the other to a stone, and throw it into the water where it is deep enough to pull you in after it. I shall force you to admit one of two things, either that little children cannot believe or that they can. If they cannot believe, I shall force you to the conclusion that they must be damned, for Jesus said. He that believeth not shall be damned. Would you admit for a moment that God would damn an innocent little child? Then why not admit that God can give it a saving faith through the means of grace, and thereby make it a child of God? The moment a child is baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, God says, it is My child. But, you may say, this little infant may afterwards reject the Savior. May not old sinners do the same? Have you ever heard of people that were

baptized when they were past twelve, or fifteen, or twenty years of age, who afterwards rejected their Savior? Does that effect the baptism? Does that change the covenant on the part of God? God never will break His covenant. You may break yours. The Bible does not say that He that is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned, baptized or not. I want my child to be in the covenant of God as soon as possible, and therefore shall have it brought to Him by water and the Spirit.

5. New Testament Christians Baptized Their Children

Another reason why I shall do this, is because the New Testament Christians had their infants baptized. The statement is often made: Show me a single example in the Bible where people baptized their infants, and then I will give up. Even if we cannot show such an example, there is nothing in that kind of an argument. When the Lord Jesus tells us to do a thing, it is our duty to do it, whether we can find an example of any one who did it or not. When God says, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, He means for us to do so, and it is not our business to ask Did anybody ever obey? A few days ago a member of the Campbellite church said to me if I could point out one single case of infant baptism to her in the Bible, she would give up. I said to her, "You have the Holy Communion in your church, do you not?" "Yes," she said, "and every Sunday, too!" Well," said I, "if you can show me a single example in the Holy Scriptures where a woman ever went to communion, I will give up." She understands very well that she has a right to go to communion because Christ instituted it for sinners who believe in the words of institution, but she cannot see how infants can be baptized when Christ included them in His command. Where in the Bible do we read that an Indian was baptized, or a heathen from the Sandwich Islands? Do we mean to say, therefore, that they have no right to be baptized?

But we need not search in vain for infant baptism in the New Testament. There were five whole families baptized. It would seem very natural that in an age when it was considered a disgrace not to have children, some child would be found in five families. But there is another argument that some people overlook in the New Testament. The New Testament was not written in a day. The history of the New Testament includes a period of at least

sixty years from the time the first chapters were written until the Book was closed. Many of these parents were baptized in the beginning of these sixty years; they had time to rear children or grandchildren, but where within the lids of the New Testament do you find a single example of children of Christian parents who were allowed to grow up and be baptized afterwards? There isn't a single case. This silence on the part of the New Testament ought to convince one of unprejudiced mind that the custom of the New Testament was for whole households to ha baptized, including the little infants.

6. It Is The Only Way For the World To Be Won For Christ Jesus

The final reason I give for having my child baptized, not only in infancy, but as soon as possible, is this, it is the only way for the world ever to be won for Christ Jesus. Surely the spirit of the Gospel is to make Christians of all nations. Pray tell me, how shall we make Christians of all nations if Christian people are going to continue to rear heathen in their own families? Suppose for a single moment that this church were to undertake to Christianize the world, and the pastor and his wife are baptized, and the children are permitted to choose for themselves; Brother Jolinston and his wife are baptized and his children can do as they please; Brother Smith and his wife are baptized, but the children can do as they please; suppose we all go on in that way, how shall we make Christians of other people, when at our very tables are sitting heathen multiplying and growing every day? Surely if there is one command that God has given to parents it is this, that they and their household shall serve the Lord God. What right have our Christian parents to have children in their homes who themselves are not Christians? If, therefore, we are ever to convert the world to Christ, there is only one way to do it, and that is for parents to be Christians, to bring their children to Christ and keep them with Christ; then to influence other families to come to Christ and bring their children to Him, and let the influence go on around the whole world, until all the families shall know Jesus Christ as their only Savior? This is Bible doctrine; this is Lutheran doctrine. This is the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Amen.

53. How to Get Rich. *Eighteenth Sunday After Trinity.*

I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in every thing ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you; so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who also shall confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. 1 Cor. 1:4-9.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THE CHURCH AT CORINTH was a mighty monument both of the power of Satan and the power of the Gospel. The church at Corinth, according to this epistle had some members who were no honor to that church. Paul tells us it was a fact that some were not only guilty of fornication, but even in their own families. Oh, what a shame and disgrace to that church to have such members. Then, again, there were some members who were going to law with each other, a thing that two Christian people never should do. Right is right and wrong is wrong, and God's Word must settle any question between church members without going to law. There was another disgrace that was found, though, and that, as an evidence of the power of Satan in that church, was the fact that some people when they went to the Lord's Supper drank so much wine that they became intoxicated. Another great disgrace to the church of that day was that some of them publicly denied the resurrection of the body. It was these evidences of the devil in the church at Corinth that moved the apostle Paul to pen this beautiful epistle.

But Paul was not so narrow minded as to judge a whole congregation by a few bad members. It is always a mistake to judge a family by one bad one in the family, as it is a mistake to judge a city by a few bad men in it, or a

congregation. The apostle Paul looked upon this church at Corinth which he had established, together with Silas and Timothy, in the year 54, as a noble church, a church that demanded much grace; consequently he said:

“I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in everything ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge.”

As a congregation the one at Corinth was not rich in this world's goods. He refers to that in another chapter when he says there that the church of God in this world is not noted for its wealth, nor for its great and noble men, but rather for those in poverty. The church of Corinth itself was not rich, but Corinth was a very rich city. It was one of the most noted cities of the Orient; it was one of those cities that stood for learning and for the highest wisdom of the then known world. That congregation was rich in doctrine, rich in the Word of God, rich in consecrated men and women, who gave their lives for their Master. The question arises this morning:

How Shall We Get Rich?

And the answer is found in this text of mine:

- I Get your salvation right away.
- II. Enjoy your salvation every day.

I. Get Your Salvation Right Away

We all want to get rich, but Oh, what a narrow view of life it is simply to think of this world's possessions. I say to you: Get your salvation right away. “I thank my God always on your behalf for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ.”

How did that church at Corinth get the grace of God? They got the grace of God through the preaching of the Word by three men – Paul, Silas and Timothy; and hearing this Word they heard of the grace of God, accepted Jesus Christ, became rich in all things through Him; they did not put this matter off from time to time. The world, my friends, can never buy your salvation. If you had the whole world today as yours, you could not buy the

forgiveness of a single sin. It was that curse in the church of God in the days of the Reformation that made Luther arise and fight. Those men were not only selling forgiveness of the sins of the past, but even for money selling the forgiveness of the sins they should commit in the future, giving them a certificate, for money, that they might go on and sin all they pleased, and finally be saved. That wasn't Bible doctrine; it wasn't true, and consequently Dr. Luther arose in the power of God and held up the pure Gospel, that man is saved by grace, by faith alone in Jesus Christ. The world cannot buy salvation. In those days there was a great church to be built, called St. Peter's, and no money on hands to build it; and therefore the devil put it into the hearts of those people at Rome, that if they could just make the people believe that they could buy forgiveness of sins, there would be no want of money, nor was there. It was the money that the people gave out in Europe for the forgiveness of their sins that built that large St. Peter's cathedral at Rome, and that church stands there today, a monument of the folly of men obeying Satan rather than God. The Lord said "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Christ knew what true wealth meant. He knew what you need to be rich. You need to be a saved man; you need to be a saved woman; you need your dear children saved; that is what you need, and you need it right away. A man has no right to put off one hour his soul's salvation. When the soul itself is worth more than all the world, how can a man afford for sixty minutes to run the risk of that soul being lost? If you knew that tomorrow forenoon by a little negligence you might lose your home, for nothing in the world would you fail to be on hands to secure that home of yours; and yet your soul may be lost this evening; it may be that you are an unbaptized man, that you have never put your full trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, that the curse of God is resting upon you. How shall we get rich? Get rich right away by getting your salvation; and remember, as I said a moment ago, the world cannot purchase it for you. Only Jesus Christ can save souls. "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ."

And, again, Jesus Christ crucified is our Savior. Not far along in this letter Paul writes these memorable words: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." Remember, my friends, that salvation

is not only in Christ, but it is in Christ on the cross; it is in Jesus Christ the God-man, able to pay the debt of the world because He is God; paying the debt of the world because He is man; paying for your sins and for mine, because He is suffering, finishing our redemption He finished His life on the cross, and gave it up that you and I might live. My friends, the only hope of ever getting rich is to get the crucified Lord as your Savior, and the only way to get Him as your Savior is to get Him wholly and solely by grace. "By grace are ye saved."

We are all natural Pharisees. We all imagine that in some way or other we must do something to earn our salvation, and yet it isn't true. Salvation through Christ must come alone as an object of mercy, and you and I can do nothing but simply cast ourselves down at the Savior's feet and say, Here I am,

"In my hands no price I bring. Simply to Thy cross I cling."

"But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe;
Here Lord, I give myself away.
'Tis all that I can do."

And then comes the merciful Savior and says: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," and He picks us up, and like the good Shepherd, presses us to His bosom of love, carries us home to the Father and says. Forgive this dear sheep, this poor, lost sheep, for the Shepherd's sake. Yes, this dear sheep was lost; I found it. It deserved death; I died for it. It could not help itself; I lifted it up, bore it on My shoulders, and bring it home; Father, receive this child for My sake."

Such, my friends, is salvation; get it right away; and the covenant is this: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. These are the words of the Lord our Savior and He cannot lie. Oh, dear friends, get rich, and have salvation right away.

II. Enjoy Your Salvation Every Day

Then, if you want to get rich, enjoy your salvation every day, by sowing more every day, growing more every day, and reaping well on the last great

day.

“That in everything ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you; so that ye come behind in no gift.”

What a wonderful statement. That in everything ye are enriched by Him, by Jesus Christ. I do not think that Paul was thinking at all about earthly possessions, but even if he was, it is true. Do you realize this evening, my dear hearers, that you haven't got one foot of ground that you did not get through Christ? Do you realize that when God made the heavens and the earth, He made them with His Word? And do you realize that the Word that made the worlds is the same Word of which John says it became flesh and dwelt among us? Do you realize that the Maker of heaven and earth is the Incarnate Savior? And therefore you have not got a thing in this world that you did not get of Jesus Christ your Savior. But, as I said a moment ago, I do not believe that Paul had in mind earthly possessions; he was speaking about the salvation of this church, and that they were enriched in Him in all these things. “In all utterance.” It is always difficult to translate any language into another. The word here translated “utterance” in the English, is called “doctrine” in the German Bible; there are other translations which make it “speech” or “preaching of the Gospel.” The word “logos” in Greek may mean the Word itself; it may mean the doctrine of Christ; it may mean the preaching of the prophets and of the apostles and of the servant of God. No difference which translation we take, it is true that a man should every day of his life sow more of the Word of God. It is not enough simply to be a saved man; we should also sow the Word of God every day. We should try more and more to send the Word of God out among the heathen; we should every day try to sow it down deep into our own minds; we should every day teach it and preach it to our families and to our fellowmen. Since we shall all reap what we sow, it is surely necessary that we sow good seed, and where is there any better seed than the Word of God?

How few people there are who really enjoy their salvation. We have so many who look upon the church of God as a kind of a place to go to once in a while, and when they do go, they think they have rendered God a most wonderful service, instead of feeling that this is the place where God comes to serve us; instead of feeling that this is the place where we can meet with God's children and sing praises to His holy name and enjoy the blessing of

being together as men and women and children of the great family of God. In a colored assembly in the South not many years ago, a man said to the leading man among them: "How does it come that you people assemble here and worship God? Why do you not worship Him in your little huts? Why do you come together as you do?" Now this colored man was not an able expounder of his own thoughts, but he had a way of illustrating what he meant, and so he took a stick and began to scratch around in the coals of fire until he had every coal separated from the other, and soon they noticed that the fire was out and every coal was black.

"Now," said he to this man who was finding fault with him for meeting with God's children, "if I had kept those coals together they would have burned; there would have been a bright flame there and we would be warm ourselves, but pulling them apart they are black and the fire is out; and just so it is in this world," said he, "if every man were to be a Christian in his own home and never associate with the Christian congregation, he would soon become a black coal, no fire left in him, and the consequence is he would go back to heathendom." And that is why there are so many people in the present day who tell us that one day they went to Sunday School; one day they were good Christian church members; but what are they today? Heathen in a Christian land. Black coals. We cannot touch them without getting our fingers dirty. They are not living in the flame of God's eternal kingdom. "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is," is the Word of God. I would therefore say, enjoy your salvation. Sow every day.

I would also say. Grow every day. Let us not always be little babes in Christ. The apostle Paul tells us that he gives to the babes milk, and to the growing men meat. How many people there are, just as soon as they are catechized and confirmed, seem to think now they have got all they ever need. Oh, dear friends, that is only food for the babes. The Christian ought to remember that God's Word is a mighty deep and that lie never can fathom it, and if you do once learn to enjoy the growth in God's grace, then, my friends, there will be an enjoyment in your whole life that you never possessed before. It is a noble thing to be worth while having somebody thank God that you are living. "I thank my God always on your behalf," said Paul of the Corinthian church. It is a good thing for you and me so to grow that somebody in the world is blessed because of our growth. It is a good thing for us every day to learn something new of Him who knoweth

all things. Surely, my friends, we do know that the world is full of lies; we do know that there are teachers who are not safe. Get knowledge from Him who knoweth all things. Get knowledge of God. And when you get knowledge today, it only enables you to get more knowledge tomorrow. I could have the testimony of every Sunday School teacher in this church, that he is learning more of God's Word at every succeeding teachers' meeting. Why? Because all that he has learned in the past is only enabling him to learn more the next time. How easy it is for you to do today what one time you could not do at all. What has enabled you to do this? Only constant, diligent labor. I am satisfied there is not a young man in the world that can come out of the seminary and step into this church and do the work that is to be done here; it would simply be impossible; it is only the strong man physically who has been trained for years to do much and do it easily, that could ever do the work that is to be done here. And so, my friends, it is in the study of God's Word. Let us not be satisfied with the Christianity that has simply kept what it had twenty years ago, yes, possibly even longer than that, and does not know anything more today. How many of you parents would like to be tested right now in reciting the ten commandments? Do you know them? How many of you would be willing to stand a public examination right now in Luther's catechism? Do you know what you once knew, or have you forgotten all about it; or are you to be pitied because you never did know these things? And who wants to stop with a few little lessons out of God's great Book? When I can assure you that the history of the United States can be found in half of one of the chapters of Revelation; when I can assure you that the history of the four universal kingdoms of the world are contained in two chapters of Daniel; who is then going to say, I can fathom that great book in a year and a half or two years?

Enjoy your Christianity by sowing every day and growing, until it can be said of you as it was said of the church at Corinth, that in everything ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance and in all knowledge. Spurgeon used to say: "When I was a young man my mind was all confusion, but when I was converted to God, I put Christ in the center of my brain and wrapped all knowledge around Him." That is what made Spurgeon such a powerful preacher. Oh, that we would all this morning let the Sun of Righteousness shine in on our brain, and search and learn, and wrap around Christ all our knowledge. That is why a college that has no religion in it, never makes a

scholar. You cannot show me a single college in the world that does not teach religion that ever made a man of God or a powerful man in this world. The great wise man wisely said: The fear of God is the beginning of all wisdom. You might send a man through all the secular schools of the world, and through all the secular colleges of the world, if that man has never been in a Sunday School or in a church, or never had any religious instruction, that man with all his diplomas has never even made a beginning of wisdom. Is that man wise that doesn't even know why we live? Is that man wise that is searching knowledge and is losing his soul? Is that man wise that does not know the first great truth, why we live and where we are to spend eternity?

Enjoy your salvation, not only by sowing every day, and growing every day, but by reaping well on that last great day. "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." Oh, says Paul, I cannot be with you any longer up at Corinth, but I ask you as a church to sow every day and grow every day, and reap well on that last great day by being blameless. Isn't that a beautiful aim in life, to be blameless on that last great day? Isn't that worth living for? You and I are all guilty of weaknesses these days, on all sides; but our aim should be to live every day nearer and nearer to Jesus; our aim should be every day to get homesick for the coming of Christ. Now Jesus is walking with us through His promise, as He walked with those two young men from Jerusalem to Emmaus when their hearts were burning because of His presence. Now Jesus abides with us, and breaks bread with us, and we welcome Him, but we reach for His hand and cannot touch it. The difference between a true Christian and one that is none, is known by his desire for that last great day. The man who is no child of God shivers when he mentions death; he trembles when he speaks of the Judgment. The true child of God, like John of old on the Isle of Patmos, looks heavenward and cries, "Lord, come quickly. Come quickly" The day of the Lord is coming for you and for me, on that day when my soul takes its departure; for me it is the day of reaping, for there will be no change in my soul from that day until the last great day; but the day of the Lord, I take it to be that last great day when the harvest will come, and let us so live that on that day we will reap well.

We want to get rich. When do we know whether the farmer is prospering? Not so much in the fall when he turns up the soil and sows his wheat; not so much on the clear winter day when we see the field covered with green wheat; not so much in the spring when the snow melts away and we see the green carpet still covering the earth; we are not quite sure when we see the tall wheat waving in the wind in the months of May and June; we are not quite sure when he reaps the wheat and hauls it into the barn; we never know exactly what his harvest is until the threshing machine has done its work and pulled away from the barn; then the farmer stands up and looks at the record, and says, I have sown, and I have reaped, and I have threshed, and now this is the harvest; and it is that, that decides as to how he prospered. And so if you want to get rich, don't show me your house, and your barn, and your mines, and your fields, and your bank accounts. Rich people in this world's goods are like the big oaks that grow very large but have nothing on them but a few little acorns. The man that is really rich is the man that can say right now. My soul is saved and I enjoy my Christianity; I am going to try to be honest and upright and grow in grace and strength and live for the glory of my Father in heaven, and for the welfare of my friends and my foes, always asking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, sowing every day, and realizing that I hope to reap more, and on that last great day when I stand before my Master, I will not trust in my righteousness, but alone in His great mercy and forgiveness; and; when I breathe my last breath my last sin is committed and the last one forgiven, and on that morning of the resurrection I want to stand before Him with His perfection, blameless; then I will be rich. Oh, the riches of the blameless man on the Judgment day, standing before his God! This is wealth.

If I were to tell you in a few words what you need today above everything else, I would say that you need six hearts in one; I would say that you need three hearts out of the Old Testament, and three hearts out of the New, all in your own one heart. What do I mean?

I mean that first of all you need the heart of a Jacob, who, wrestled that night with the angel of God, and when in the morning he was commanded to desist, he said. Lord, I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me; that is the heart that you need. Not to let go of God in His mercy until He blesses you.

Then you need the heart of a Job. Wealthy as he was in the possession of lands, with a large family, with all the kinds of animals that made him the

most wealthy man and the most noted man of the East, he is tried by Satan, with God's permission. The animals are stolen and burned; the house topples over and the family is killed, and all that he has is swept away from him in a single day; then he shaves his head and kneels down in the dust and says: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." And when Job said that, he was richer by far than he was when he had all his possessions. That is the heart that you need, and that is the heart that I need.

And then we all need the Old Testament heart found in the 73rd Psalm, when Asaph looked up and said: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." That is the heart that you need, that finds nothing in all the universe so precious to you and your God.

Then you need three hearts that are found in the New Testament also. Christ had been up on the mountain of Transfiguration, with James, and Peter, and John, and when He came down to the rest of the disciples there was a great multitude following Him, and among them was one man who came and said, I have a son who is a deaf mute and possessed of the devil, and this Satan within him throws him down on the earth and makes the foam come out of his mouth and wallows him in the dust; I have been to your disciples and they cannot help him, and I ask Thee, O Savior of the world, to help this boy of mine. Then the Savior looked at him and said. Why, this poor boy! How long has he been in this awful condition? Ever since he was born, said the father. What I want to know, said the father, is this: Is there any help for this my boy? Yes, said the Savior, there is, if you can believe; for him who believeth all things are possible. And there was a new light came to that father's heart. Is it possible that this, my boy, possessed of the devil, foaming and groaning in the dust of the earth, this boy whom Satan has thrown into the water and I have pulled him out, this boy whom Satan has thrown into the fire and I have snatched him from the flames, this boy who has been our care from infancy for myself and my wife, is there any hope for him? And with tears rolling down his face he said to Christ, I believe: help Thou mine unbelief! And Jesus commanded the demons to leave him, and there lay the boy as if dead; and Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up and gave him back to his father and said.

This can only be done by fasting and prayer. And the father's heart that said. Help mine unbelief, is the heart that you and I need this morning.

Then you remember the story of the Pharisee who thanked God that he was so much better than his fellowmen, and how he thanked God that he was so much better than that poor publican; and then you remember how that poor publican, knowing that there was no hope for him except in the mercy of Christ, did not look up, but simply looked down, and he knew where all the trouble was; it was right in his own breast, and he struck upon his own heart: Here, my God, is the trouble, right here; God be merciful to me a sinner! That is the heart that we need this morning, the publican's heart.

And there is one more thing that I believe we need. When Christ as a little child was taken into the temple, there was an aged woman and an aged man there who had been waiting to see the Savior; and Simeon of old took the little child in his arms and lifted his voice of thanks to heaven and said: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." Oh, how rich Simeon was that morning I May God give us these six hearts this evening in one, that we may be rich today and rich forever. Amen.

Prayer

O Father in heaven, Thou who didst send Paul and Silas and Timothy to that great city of Corinth, determined to preach nothing, but Christ and Him crucified, and by the preaching of those men didst establish Thy Church, and didst thereby give us this great epistle written by Paul to show us how we can be rich in all things through Christ, we pray Thy rich blessing to rest upon the message of the evening. Give Thy rich blessing to every father and to every mother in this house. We ask a special blessing upon these hoary heads. It will not be long, O God, until some who are sitting in this house this evening will know of the things they are asked to believe now. It will not be long, O God, until some of us younger people will go home before the aged ones, to stand in Thy presence and see Thee face to face. Lord, help us to sow good seed; help us to grow a great harvest; help us to reap well on our last day, and may the harvester, by the mercy of Christ, be

found blameless. We ask all these favors in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

54. Where Are We? Nineteenth Sunday After Trinity.

That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor; for we are members one of another. Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Eph. 4:22-28.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

WHEN WE ARE TRAVELING over this wide country of ours in a railroad train, it is nothing uncommon to hear the passengers say, Where are we? When we go into the hospitals and find lying there a man who has been severely wounded in some wreck, and he has come to, about the first thing he does is to say. Where are we? When we stand by the bedside of the dying and they are permitted by God's grace to take as it were a look behind the veil, and then come back for a moment and open their eyes, they frequently say. Where are we? When the Judgment shall have passed, and those who have entered heaven have seen the glory on high, and those who have rejected their Savior shall be lost forever, it seems to me there will be a groan pass through the very corridors of hell, Where are we? As I read this chapter from which my text is taken, I notice that the path from darkness to light, from eternal death to eternal life, is not a short one. Here is a wonderful journey to take spiritually, and all along this path, when I read of the progress that should be made by Christians, I cannot help but ask the question, Where am I? Where are we? May the Holy Spirit help us to

answer this question this evening, and may we be found with Jesus our Savior.

Where Are We?

There are three places where we may be:

- I. The state of total darkness.
- II. The state of dangerous deception.
- III. The state of eternal day.

I. The State Of Total Darkness

“That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man.”

These two words, “former conversation,” refer to the heathen life, the former walk, and it is here beautifully described in the following words: “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” No human pen has ever crowded more into a few words than Paul did in these three verses. He shows the state of the heathen in that awful state of darkness; he shows how their minds were in the dark, and their hearts, and their lascivious work.

1. Their Minds Are In The Dark

He calls attention to their minds being in the dark.

“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.”

Did you ever notice how vain heathen are? Even in those places where they do not know who God is and do not know what a Bible is, and do not know what civilization is, you will find the proudest people in the world. I

remember passing through Mexico and Arizona a few years ago, and was surprised to find those filthy heathen down there with their jewelry hanging around their necks, ears, and even to their noses. Oh, what vanity of mind! And that is the condition a man is in when he gets away from God and gets away from the true religion of Jesus Christ, the mind is all dark.

2. Their Hearts Are In The Dark

The Heart And when the mind is dark, the heart is dark with it.

“Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart, who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness.”

Did you ever hear the darkened heart described more correctly than Paul describes it in these words, “alienated from the life of God?” Oh, the heart that has never had the Son of Righteousness shine in it, how black it is! So black that it is filled with ignorance, so dark that it becomes blind, so hard that it loses its feeling. The other evening when we heard that great lecture on the Turk I suppose some of you thought. How is it possible that a man could ever get so far in meanness as to starve a little babe to death? I suppose some of you wondered how it was possible that there could be a whole nation on this civilized globe where women and their children are hounded to death by a man who with one word and one turn of his hand could save their lives and make them a civilized nation. It is not so hard to understand when we remember the awful darkness of heathendom. It is not so hard to understand when we remember that in God we live, and move, and have our being, and just as soon as we get away from God, who is light, we plunge into darkness, and where there is darkness there is hardness of heart, and at last the heart gets so hard that the feelings vanish. When you uttered your first curse word the chills went up your back; when you did your first damnable deed you shuddered, but you kept on doing the same mean, dirty thing, until today you can do it with pleasure. You have got the hardened heart, the blackness of the darkness of the heathen life.

3. They Are Led To Plunge Into Meanness

There is not only a state of heart when the feeling has passed away, but there is the darkness that leads the man to plunge greedily into all the meanness he can think of.

“Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” – “given themselves over unto lasciviousness.”

There is in every man a natural desire to do wrong. The spiritual desire is to do right. There is a conflict between the light and the darkness. There is a conflict between the spiritual gift of God and the darkness that comes from Satan. When a man begins to go wrong, he has a battle; when he continues to go wrong he finally gets to that point where he loses self respect; having lost his self respect, he now says, Satan, you can have it your own way; instead of trying to be clean, I am going to try to be unclean; instead of trying to be unclean here and there, I will gather together all the uncleanness I can find, and will work in it with greediness. “Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness.” If you can imagine a man so thoroughly hardened, so dark that he wishes he had all the meanness and ungodliness in the world in a bunch, that he could work in it and just plunge into it greedily, as if he did not have time to do it all, there you have the picture of the awful darkness of the ungodly who are away from Christ. Where are we? Oh, I hope there are none in this house this evening in this state of blackness and darkness.

II. The State of Dangerous Deception

There is another state, and there is where I fear a great many of us will find ourselves, and that is the state of dangerous deception. The apostle calls attention here to deceitful lusts. Satan himself is a deceiver from the beginning, and we are told here that we should give no place to Satan. “Neither give place to the devil.” The great trouble with too many Christians is that they want to be Christians, but they would like to be Christians and have the devil right with them. In other words, they give a chair to the devil and say. Make yourself at home, so if I want you I have got you handy. That is about the spirit of some Christians, and Satan has the

wonderful gift of making us believe he is an angel of light; he has the wonderful gift of making us believe we are all right when we are all wrong. What are these deceptions?

We sometimes think we are talking when the devil is talking for us. "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor; for we are members one of another." – "put away lying." There are a great many people who think they can tell a lie and it is their lie. Yes, it is their lie spoken by the devil "in their tongues; they made a place for the devil – here is my tongue, come and make your home in it and lie. All we need to do is to stop and think what God is. God is truth. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. If a man lives, and moves, and has his being in God, he cannot by God's power tell a lie, or by that very act he would put God out of his tongue. Here is Satan, a deceiver from the beginning, a liar from the beginning. Satan says. Come on, let me get into your tongue and I will tell a lie; I will slander my neighbor; I will tell this and that about people whether it is true or not; and, my dear friends, I believe as truly as I stand here this evening, that in God's sight a liar is one of the worst men on earth. The man that will just simply say, Here, devil, take my tongue and lampoon the best man on earth; slander whom you will and say all manner of things that are not true – may God have mercy on the slanderer. May God have mercy on the good old gossip that sits around and says, I am holy, and now I think may be this isn't just right, and I think may be that isn't just right; and then the other old fool of a gossip says, The thing is just as the lady told me, and lies, and writes it down, ashamed to put her name to it, and publishes the ungodly lie to the world; if the devil is not in that tongue he never was anywhere. Beware! Where are you this evening? Where am I this evening? If I were to come to your house and find you lying on your bed with an ugly cancer on your tongue, I would be filled with sympathy for you; I would pray God, if possible to save you; I would pray God to deliver you from that awful cancer; but I would rather today, God being my witness, have my mouth full of cancer than to be a slandering liar, than to tell the untruth, for the devil is in the tongue of the liar, do not forget that." Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another."

There is not only a state of dangerous deception in lying, but there is also this: A man may think he is sleeping all alone when he is sleeping with the devil. Wouldn't that be a terrible thing if tonight you go to your

bedroom and you were to find Satan there by the side of your bed, and he would say, Now I would like to sleep with you tonight; you would say, Never! never! Let me out of this room. I will never sleep with the devil. And yet there are hundreds of professed Christians, and some come to communion, who sleep with him every night. How is that? Well, you have in the first place a bad temper, and you virtually say. Now, devil, you come and enter this temper of mine; and then you pick a quarrel with your neighbor across the street; then you stop talking to that neighbor and you keep up that hatred; you are trying to find something all the time that you do not like, trying to say something bad about this one and about that one; half the time you are running around trying to let your temper make enemies; and then you go to bed that night and you lie down, and if you don't sleep with the devil, nobody ever did – sleeping with him every night and you think you are a Christian; you think you are a child of God; you think if you were to die this night you would go right to heaven; and if you can go to heaven hating any man on earth, not speaking to your next door neighbor, having an ill-will toward your fellowmen, I want to say that I never want to go to heaven, because the Bible that I study and the heaven that I know about, will never have an unforgiven sin in it, and for that reason God taught us to pray daily, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;” and if you do not forgive every man on earth, you are asking God in that prayer to treat you as you treat the one whom you will not forgive. You are praying, God don't forgive me; I want to go to hell and sleep with the devil tonight.

Why do I talk about sleeping with him? Because the Bible tells us plainly: “Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” In the same chapter Paul writes: “Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.” I read the other day of a man who was so constantly getting angry, and his anger was so uncontrollable, that he made up his mind that in the neighborhood where he lived it was impossible to ever control that anger. He thought the reason he got so angry was because his neighbors were all wrong, and so he made up his mind he would move into a large woods where he could be all alone and would never have any trouble with his temper any more. The first day he was cutting down a tree, and he got so warm and thirsty; he picked up his jug, walked to the spring and set it under the water; when it was nearly full the jug rolled over; he sat it up again, and

again it rolled over; the third time he threw it against the rock and it flew to pieces. Then he began to think where he was, and picked up the jug handle and said: Where are my enemies this morning? There was no neighbor around. That man had to go to the woods to find out that the old devil was in him instead of in his neighbors; that the devil was in his own temper instead of somewhere else.

When John the Patriarch of Constantinople, a good Christian man, had a quarrel one day with a good Christian man, he went home very much dissatisfied, and when he looked out over the far west and saw the sun going down, he remembered what Paul wrote in the fourth chapter of Ephesians: Let not the sun go down upon your wrath; and the man that had the quarrel with him remembered the same thing; and so John the Patriarch started at once to see his neighbor and said. My neighbor, the sun is going down. That was all that was necessary. The sun was going down. They both had been instructed in God's Word, and that is the only help and the only salvation of the world today. Take the little children and put God's Word into their minds, and then when they go wrong the Holy Spirit will lead them right again. So they both started from home at the same time, and they met half way, and they shook hands and said, Let us forgive each other and go home and sleep as God's children. They would not go to bed hating each other. It is just as plain as God's truth this evening, you cannot go to bed tonight with an ill-will toward any man on earth, without sleeping with the devil. There is a state of dangerous deception.

Not only do we find this state of dangerous deception in this, that Satan sometimes may be in our tongues and tempers, but we also find that he can get right into our pocketbooks. "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." If there is anything mean in all this world it is to go to a man who one time possibly has stolen, and say. You are a thief; or to go to a man who one time told a lie and say. Now you are a liar; or to the man who one time did this or that and say. You are guilty of it now. If every man on earth were to be called a drunkard who one time got drunk, how many sober men would we have? If every man were considered a thief and a thug who one day did a dishonest thing, how many honest men would we have? I am not upholding any crime, but I do say this, when you come to compare man with man, and woman with woman, when you compare them as under the eyes of God, you will find that in the general sweep of all

their lives, there isn't very much difference, and the thing for us to do when a man has done wrong in the past and wants to do what is right now, is to stretch out the hand of love and say, I respect you, and love you for trying to do right now; if you stole, don't steal any more; if you ever did any wrong in the past, by the help of God make up your mind this day to do right. And when you have that kind of a heart in yourself, then you have something approaching very close to the truest Christianity.

But how is it with Satan? Satan comes to a man and says. Look here; I would like to occupy your pocketbook a little while. And when you let him in, he has got just two ways of dealing with that pocketbook. To the owner of one pocketbook he says: You have worked hard all your life; you have worked hard all day; you are supporting your family; they are eating off of you; the thing for you to do is to walk into this saloon and take a drink and cool off; you have earned it. That one drink makes you feel better; take another; you have earned this money. When he has taken two, Satan says: That will do for the present, but you have a good distance to go; take another one; then he takes the third; and by that time his good neighbor comes in and Satan says: Here, you are brothers; treat him; give him a glass; you can afford it; it is your money. And the drunken man reaches out and pays for it all. Then in comes another thirsty man, and that is the way they go on, and Satan through that one pocketbook begins to empty all the pocketbooks in that saloon; and the first thing the man knows he goes home with his little pocketbook so thin it looks as though an elephant had stepped on it; nothing in it; but if he could open it and look, he would find that Satan entered in that day and took out of that pocketbook all he possibly could to rob that man and his family and to rob the church of God.

Sometimes Satan finds out he has hold of an old hard-hearted sinner who is a miser, and says. Can I get into your pocketbook? Yes, get into it. I want to tell you you have worked hard for all you have, and what you have is yours; I wouldn't join the church, because if you do they will want money for missions, and for this and for that, and the best thing you can do is to stay at home and let me stay in this pocketbook and we will keep it tight; the only time we will open it is when you can get more money. And after a while this man gets pretty hungry and he would like to have something good to eat. Satan says. Look here, after a while you are going to get old and cannot work; let me have this nickel and this dime; you will get hungry, but you will need it when you get old. He says, that is right, and doesn't eat

enough. Some time the man looks at his pocketbook and says, I would like to get myself a suit of clothes today; but Satan says, Don't be proud; your old suit is good enough; you just keep what you have here; wear your old clothing; you don't need suspenders, take a rope and tie it around you; if your wife wants a dollar or two, don't give it to her; let her go and work; if the children want another new dress, don't get them any, they will get too proud; we will save; you are going to get old, and after a while I will open your pocketbook. Well, time passes on and the poor man goes along earning more money after that, buys farm after farm and block after block, and he swells his bank account larger and larger; the poor man gets hungrier and hungrier; his clothes get shabbier and shabbier, the poorest man on God's earth, and the devil made him poor. Pity the old miser. Pity the man that has given his pocketbook over to the devil, either to say, Take it all out, or else to say. Keep it all in.

“Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”

If there is anything in the world my friends we ought to do, it is to work hard for every dollar that we get. And when we do work hard we ought to see that that dollar is rightly used, and to use it rightly, we ought to expend it for the good of God's kingdom and for the good of humanity. I said a while ago Satan said to that man. Save all that you can until you are old; but soon that man starves to death, and he is put down into the ground and the dirt shoveled over him, and it actually sounds as if the very ground were falling on a hard stone, for his heart was harder than any rock. And then the devil gets all the money; for the boys and girls quarrel over it, get into a lawsuit, and the lawyers get it, and what becomes of it you all know. Beware of Satan in the pocketbook. If you find yourself getting so liberal that you cannot save anything, open your pocketbook and say, Satan get out of here; if you find yourself getting so niggardly and miserly that you are not willing to give up anything any more, break open the pocketbook and say by God's help, Satan get out of here. Make no place for the devil, says Paul.

III. The State of Eternal Day

I have now shown you in the first place a state that is total darkness, and in the second place a state of dangerous deception; now I want to show you a state that is eternal day. In this same chapter the Apostle Paul calls attention to this great truth:

“And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

It seems to me the Apostle Paul has crowded more great facts and truths into this fourth chapter of Ephesians than you can find almost anywhere else in his writings.

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”

Why is it that so many old people are constantly running from church to church and constantly wavering in their faith, never knowing where they stand? It is because they did not begin right. It is because they never did know what they believed. It is because they have laid the foundation very poorly. Let us, my dear friends, be well instructed in God’s Holy Word; let us learn the truths contained in the five chief parts of Dr. Luther’s catechism thoroughly, and no power on earth nor in hell can change our faith. Then we are built upon the solid rock of God’s Word, on the Rock Jesus. The Apostle Paul said, Don’t be a child; do not get away back there and stay there forever, but press forward, coming out of total darkness with renewed mind and the Spirit of God in you, press forward. Press forward and fight; fight for the light that is coming, for there is in the distance an eternal day, so that victory must come for the right, and to do this he speaks of three things that we must do: We must put off the old man; we must put on the new man; we must put out the old devil. That is the only way to reach this eternal day.

“That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.”

This old man, I suppose you all know who he is. when Adam and Eve were first created, holy, in the image of their God there was no old man; but when Adam sinned and Eve fell, then there was an old sinful nature born in Eden, and that old sinful nature is living today, the old Adam, and this old man must be put off if we ever want to come into the light of eternal day. That is what Luther meant in the explanation of the part of Baptism where it says: It signifies that the old Adam in us by daily contrition and repentance should be drowned and die, and that a new man come forth who should walk in newness of life. This old man then let us put off by the help of God.

Again, let us put on the new man.

“And be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind, that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

The question has often been asked. What was the image of God? You will remember that God created man in His own image. It is not hard to find what that image was if we study the New Testament. In the garden of Eden man lost the image of God; the Holy Spirit by renewing us gives us the new birth; in giving us the new birth he gives us the new man; and this new man is the old image lost. What is that new man? I call your attention now to Ephesians 4:24, which I have just read:

“Put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

Then again, in Col. 3:10,

“And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.”

Therefore the image of God consists of knowledge of holiness and of righteousness. In the garden of Eden Adam lost this image; through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit we get this image back. Having this new man, you cannot keep the two men together; either the old man will try and crowd the new man out, or the new man will try to crowd the old man out. If, therefore, you wish to reach the light of eternal day, you must, by the help of God, say to the old man, Down with you and out with you; to the new man, knowledge, righteousness and holiness. Come in and make thy

dwelling in my heart and in my soul; and in order that we may have the old man out and keep the new man in, we must fight the fight with Satan.

Paul says: "Neither give place to the devil." When the Germans tell us to take a chair, they say. Take a place, and I often think of that when I read this verse: "Give Satan no place."

Why is it so many people fall? Because they say, Satan you can come in just to the door; or, come here and take a chair; I will leave you in my home or in my heart; I don't want to make much use of you, but I don't want you to be too far away; and the result is he takes possession of the house. The only way I know of being a true Christian and getting the old man out and getting the new man in is to forever sever your relations with Satan and say. No place for you. When he comes to us and says, I want you to lie, you have either got to say. Devil take a chair and I will lie; or you have got to say. Out with you; I am going to tell the truth if the heavens fall. That is the only way to reach eternal day.

A man in Germany who had three very wicked sons, said to a nobleman, "What will I do with my boys?" The nobleman said, "What is the matter with them?" He said, "One is a thief; the other a drunkard and the third is a liar." "Well," said the nobleman, "I guess the best thing to do with those boys is to do like my neighbor did with an old cat. It was always eating the cheese; so he just took a rope and tied the cat to the cheese until it nearly starved to death, and it never wanted cheese again. Take your drunken sot and get a keg of whiskey and soak him in it; take the thief and pile the money all around him and tie him there until he sees nothing but money day and night until he gets tired of it. Then he began to think of the third. Where will we put the liar? And they could not find any place on God's earth to put him.

There wasn't a place on earth to put him that he wasn't simply causing trouble, and the liar everywhere is the most damnable creature on God's earth. When Satan comes to you and says, Now tell a lie; say. Out with you; my Savior is the truth; I dare not have the devil in my tongue; you cannot have a chair in my mouth. Fight for the eternal day. When he comes to you and says. Now get angry and allow your temper to rise, don't say. Now devil, take a chair; and let your temper run away with you; you always make a fool of yourself and you know it. Say, Satan, out with you; I will let nothing disturb me; I will keep calm and cool; I will be in earnest; I will be like God Himself and have a holy wrath against wrong and sin, but the sun

shall never go down and I sleep with Satan. Out with you; no place for you. When he comes to you with provocations and says. Too many collections in the church, too many calls for help, don't give anything, say. Devil, no chair in my house; get out. When he comes to you and says. Let me have all you have got and throw it away, you don't need to support your wife and children, say, Devil no chair for you; out with you. And thus keep on fighting the fight for eternal day, moving upward and forward, until by the help of God you shall reach the fullness of the manhood of a child of God.

Where are we this morning? I am not preaching this sermon for you to point at your neighbor; I am preaching this sermon for every, true Christian, for every man and for every woman to lay his hand upon his own heart, and ask the question. Where am I?

Where have we been? Do not forget those things. Do not forget the mine from which God dug you up as a golden jewel. Do not forget where you have been and what God has done for you.

Let us not stop with the past. Let us ask ourselves the question right now. Where are we on this path from total darkness to eternal day? Are we still back in the darkness? Are we in the realm of childhood? Are we established? Are we marching onward? Are we pressing forward to the prize? Where are we?

Where will we be? Oh, the flight of time! In a very short time another will stand here where I stand to preach the Gospel; in a very short time another will hold the chair down in your home; it is only a short time that we have to live, and it becomes our duty in this short time so to live each day as we shall expect to live on that last great day. What shall we be? Where shall we be? I have no right to expect to be very far away tomorrow from where I am today. We are either going gradually down to the total darkness, or we must go gradually to the eternal day. May God the Holy Spirit give you all that determination of heart and mind this evening, that by His help you shall forever exclude Satan from any place in your soul, and shall walk in the footprints of your Savior Jesus Christ. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. These are the Words of the eternal Judge. Where are we? Where shall we be? May God help us all as one great family to be at home with Him after that great day. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the blessed privilege of not only being saved by Thy grace, but of being called to Thy ministry to proclaim Thy plan of salvation to all those who hear. And we thank Thee that Thou hast given to man not only one ear, but ears to hear. We thank Thee that Thy Word is a seed, and a power that shall not return void. We pray Thy rich blessing to rest upon the message of the evening. Oh, may it bring forth a rich harvest of souls of all hearers. O God, hear our prayer, in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

55. Five Fools. *Twentieth Sunday After Trinity.*

See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Eph. 5:15-21.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

IN HIS SERMON ON THE MOUNT, Jesus warns us not to call a brother a fool. We have no right to call one of God's children a fool; but on the other hand let us not forget that the world is full of fools, and this is acknowledged by the world as well as by the Word. Carlisle in stating the number of inhabitants of England said there were so many millions – mostly fools. Pope said, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." The poet Young said that men may live fools, but they cannot die fools.

It is not only the teaching of the world in general that there are many fools, but the Word of God speaks about two hundred times concerning that class of people called fools. In our own text the Apostle Paul refers to them when he says: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." This epistolary letter points us this evening to five fools, and may we see to it that we are not among their number.

Five Fools

I. Lives In The World And Never Sees It

The first fool described here is the one who lives in the world and never sees it.

“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.”

Circumspectly means to be seen from all around; looked at and looking out. How many people there are in this world who are constantly living as if they never saw. They do not see that this world is the place for them to be saved, and that the world itself is to be saved.

Is that man not a fool that comes into this world and has all the advantages of the Gospel light to be saved, and yet lives on from day to day, and some time he will find that he is suddenly called into eternity, and he never reaches the object for which he was created; he never accepts the Savior that died for him; he never reads the Word of God, which is God’s letter to him; he never accepts the Holy Spirit and the light and the faith which he intended to give him; he has come into the world and brought nothing with him, and has gone out and taken nothing with him, and he is lost forever, and he will say to himself in all eternity. Of all fools I am the biggest; I was in the world and I did not see that I was to be saved while I was in the world? How many people there are in the present day who seem to think that no difference how they live, beyond the grave somewhere, some place, some time or other, God will give them a chance. If a man will not take the chance from the time he is born until he dies to give his heart to God, when will he take it?

“As the tree falleth, there it lieth.” “Enter ye in at the straight gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Only two ways; only two ends; one is life everlasting and the other is eternal death. The man, therefore, I say, who lives on from day to day, walking around on the earth and does not see that he himself ought to be saved while he is on this earth, is nothing but a fool.

And it seems to me, my dear friends, that it is just as foolish if we do not look around this whole world to have it saved. It seems to me the average

Christian is perfectly satisfied if he can come to church, sit down, take up his hymnbook and think, I am a saved man, go home and think about his business, and that is all; he is not concerned about the man that lives in the next city; he is not concerned about the neighbor that lives in the next house; he is not concerned about the nations that are living in war, and destruction, and darkness; he is not concerned about the great commandment of God, Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The man that actually believes he is born in sin, that he has condemnation resting upon Him, that he has been saved by the only Savior, Jesus Christ, and has found peace for his own soul, and realizes that he that believeth not shall be damned, and then goes on and does not care whether the whole world is saved or not, I question whether that man will be saved himself. How can I have the great salvation of my God and be satisfied to see a whole race on the other side of the globe lost and damned?

II. Carries A Watch And Never Knows What Time It Is

Now let me show you Fool No. 2. It is the one who carries a watch and never knows what time it is.

“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

There are people in this world who know very well that this is an evil world; they know that the devil is going about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; they can see the footprints of Satan all around them; they know many a neighbor is going to destruction; they know, too, that they ought to be saved; they take their watch out and look at it every day, they hear it ticking, they see the hands move, and know that as the hand is moving around on the dial, so they are constantly, day and night, marching to eternity, but they do not realize that they should have been saved long ago – long ago. Why is it that so many people want to have the preacher when they are about to enter the gate of eternity? Why is it they did not want him long ago? Suppose for a single moment you were in this audience

tonight, not a saved man, and you knew there would be given an opportunity the last week of your life to be saved, what will you think about that week that you are saved, when you realize that you have spent a whole life in this world lost and helping others to be lost, and doing nothing for the Savior who died on Calvary for you? The man that can look at his watch and see day by day what time it is, and does not realize that he should have been saved in the beginning of his life instead of at the end, is a fool, for if life is worth living as a saved man the last week, it is ten thousand times more worth living throughout life. For my part I rejoice in the fact that I do not need to look back and see months and years when I was a child of the devil and not in the covenant of my God.

And then how about the world? How about the poor, lost, dark world, that has been crying for light these many years, and has not received it? I do not know how we shall ever answer on the Judgment day of God for being so slow about foreign missions. We very often hear men say that what we want is more missionary work done at home; but let me ask you this question: Did you ever see a man in this world who was interested in the salvation of people on the other side of the globe that did not care about those at home? Do you suppose that the sun that shines all over this world does not care to shine on one single flower? Do you suppose that the man that is interested in the salvation of the black and the white ten thousand miles away, does not care for the salvation of the black and white one mile away? If you want to be a home missionary you have got to be a foreign missionary, mark what I tell you, and the man who cannot look out beyond his own confines and cannot look out beyond his own congregation and beyond his own state and beyond his own nation, is too small to be called an intelligent Christian.

Go back in history a little over two hundred years, and up in Massachusetts stands John Elliott, and before him stands a warrior of our own Indian tribe, and the Indian says to him: "How does it come that you people have been here for twenty-seven years, and you are the first man to come and tell us of Jesus Christ? Our fathers have been living in darkness and we have gone on in sin; we might have learned much of the Word of God. Why did you not tell us?" And England must answer today, Why did we not tell the red man the first twenty-seven years?

We come on down another hundred years and we find David Brainard of New Jersey, and there stands a chief and says to him: "Why do you send

men here to drive us away from our land, and drive us out of our homes? Why do you not send men here to tell us who our God is and what His Word is that we might be saved, and own our own farms?" Coming down almost a hundred years more, in 1840, an Indian, Chief, on the Manitoulin Islands, stood before a Wesleyan missionary and said to him: "I am the Chief of a great tribe; I have heard for a long time that somewhere our brothers have heard from the white men, and there is a great Word and a great God: moon after moon we have been looking up the river to see the little boat come down and tell us who the great God is and the Word that gave the worlds; Why do you not tell us?"

Not only has the voice gone out from our own nation, the voice came from darkest Africa. When Livingston, who died on his knees in prayer in that dark land, was confronted by a black warrior, that man said to Livingston: "How does it come when you people knew that our fathers were living in darkness and going to hell every day, that you did not tell us until now?" Let England and Europe answer why.

Go over to Asia among the Hindus. A large meeting was held not many years ago, and there arose a man and said: "Where has this religion of yours been all these years? We are living in the fourth great age of the world; our fathers have been perishing for centuries; and now you come and tell us the only way to be saved is through Jesus Christ. When did you find it out, and why did you not tell us? Who are the people that knew this?" And one man stood up and said: "Europe and America have known it for centuries. What kind of religion is this that never told us?"

The cry is going out all over the world. Why look at your watches to know what time it is and not know the hour of redemption for the people of the world? Oh, that we had more of those William Tyndalls who, when the flames were consuming him, cried out: "O God! open the eyes of the king of England that he may see." Oh, that we had more of the Saint Lawrences, who, on the burning coals cried out: "O God, save pagan Rome!" Oh, that we had more men like the first president of Hamilton College, who, when told by his physician that he could live only thirty minutes more, said: "Pick me up and set me down by the side of the bed on my knees that I can pray until I die, God save the world!" And the last prayer of his lips was, "God save the world!" He knew what time it was, but the fool does not.

This cry comes from the islands of the sea. Away out in the Sandwich Islands, years ago, when Mrs. Thurston conducted a school there, women

would come into the school and cry; and when that lady would say, “Why do you cry?” they would answer: “Why didn’t you come long ago and tell us it was wrong to kill our children? Our hands are stained with blood, and we have no children to be taught in your school.” A great Sunday School convention was held in a place called Hilo, and there were thousands of beautiful children there with flowers and garlands upon their heads, singing songs of praise to God. Among them was an aged woman and they heard her groaning and moaning; they saw her striking on her breast. The missionary ran down and said: “What is the matter, mother?” “What is the matter? If you had come and told me about Christ when I was young these hands would not be stained with the blood of twelve of my children; they might have been here today, but they are not here.” And she began to tear the hair out of her head. Why? Because the world is full of fools that do not know what time it is. “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

III. Always Reading And Never Learning

There is a third fool, and that is the man who is always reading and never learning anything.

“Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.” “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

There never was a time when people did more reading than they do now, and there never was a time when Christians knew less of the Bible than they do now. Some may question what I say, but you show me the Christians of olden days, and they were people of two or three books; they knew their Bibles; they knew what was in every book and in every chapter; they knew their hymnbooks from beginning to end, but today in the exchange of hymnbooks and in the putting in of new books into the libraries, the world is flooded with a literature that isn’t worth the paper to kindle the fire to burn it up. If even our church libraries are as poor as they nearly all are, what can we expect of the public libraries? I read partly fourteen books of our own library in the last ten days, and out of fourteen there are eleven that are not fit to go into any home. Think of a little child spending weeks in

reading five hundred pages to find out that finally some nonsensical Susie got married. That is the kind of literature we have in our Sunday School library. Think of the people that are sitting down day after day and reading novel after novel, story after story, when the Word of God is lying at home covered with dust, and the hymnbooks are never used to sing in worship. Think of the people that are flooding our libraries to get the very books they never should look at. How many people are going to the library today hunting out books of devotion, hunting out good true history, hunting out the things that are worth knowing? The fact is the people want literature in the form of soup and will not eat meat. There never was a time when our country was so flooded with books, books, books, and no knowledge. Ask the average reader what he knows, and it is nothing. Oh, the minds of the people that are being poisoned with the nonsensical literature of the day! It is simply awful.

The apostle called attention to the fact that there are some things we ought to know.

“Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.”

That is the thing we ought to know. And do you realize tonight what one good friend is worth to advise us what to read? I remember when a boy of fifteen years of age there came into my possession a publication called “Saturday Night,” and I began to read those blood and thunder stories; I thought I was doing some wonderful reading. When I told a good friend one day what I was doing and brought him the paper so he might have the good gift also, he said: “How many have you read?” I told him. He said: “What do you know?” And I just found out I knew nothing; I had been reading, and reading, and reading, and knew nothing. Had it not been for that friend, I might have been reading that kind of trash yet. Young people, ask yourselves the question tonight. What am I reading? What am I learning? What do I know of God’s Word? What do I know about the Bible? What do I know about the good old hymns that can be sung in times of trial and death? What do I know about the truly devotional books? How many really devotional books do you find in the homes in the present day, and whose fault is it? The preacher’s more than any one’s else. It is our duty as men of God to see to it that our homes are filled with better books, that our libraries are well searched, and that good books occupy the place where we find

trash today. So, again I say, those men that are constantly reading and do not know what their Bible teaches; those men that are constantly reading and not devotional enough to even pick up a hymnbook and follow if they do not sing, that do not know those great truths we need in times of trouble to sustain us, there is only one name to be given to those men, and that name is Fool.

IV. Sees Himself In The Mirror And Never Knows Himself

There is a fourth fool I wish to describe from the Word of God, and that is the man that sees himself every day in the looking-glass and never knows himself.

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.”

There is a legend among the Arabs running something like this, and written especially for the drunkard: They tell us that in the days of Noah when he planted his vineyard, as soon as the vine was in the ground the devil came and sprayed it with the blood of a peafowl. The vine grew; the leaves began to branch out, and then he came back again and sprayed the leaves with the blood of a monkey. After the vine had blossomed and the grapes began to grow, he came a third time and sprayed them with the blood of a lion. When the grapes were just about ripe he came a fourth time and brought the blood of a swine and sprayed it for the last time. Then this great stalk assimilated the blood of these four animals and when the grapes were ripe and the wine was made, it had the effect of doing this: When the man first began to drink that wine he soon found that he was growing very proud, like a peafowl; drinking a little while longer and a little more, he found he was getting dizzy, and then he would run and jump and make gestures like a monkey; a few more drinks and he would go home and start a quarrel and roar like a lion; a few more and he would lie down and wallow in the mud like a hog. There you have got the Arabian legend, the picture of the fool that can stand before his glass every day and cannot see his own dissipated face, cannot see the temple of the Holy Ghost ruined.

Some have said that Doctor Luther was not as pious as he should have been. My dear friends, I want to call your attention to one sentence in Luther's sermon on drunkenness. He says the drunkard is the swine that Satan, the butcher, is leading by a rope to hell to slaughter him. There you have got the idea of the great reformer. You cannot hide drunkenness behind Dr. Luther nor behind the Lutheran Church. The man that will stand and look into the looking-glass and see his flushed face, and see himself, once an innocent little child, kissed by a mother's loving lips, now with a face that shows dissipation in every line, if that man does not see what he is, he certainly is a fool. I have often thought if I were a drunkard and could step up to the mirror and see my own face, and remember what I once was, and remember what is going on with me, and remember that the Word of God says. Is not your body the temple of the Holy Ghost? and then I could see that I have made a temple of the devil and driven out the Holy Spirit, I certainly should walk away and say, I have been a fool, but by God's help I am going from this day on to lead a sober life, and come back and see in that mirror a man of God.

V. Could Enjoy God's Blessings But Chooses Instead To Be A Rebel

The fifth fool that I find in the Word of God described tonight is the man who could enjoy all of God's blessings, but chooses to be an unthankful rebel. Oh, what a beautiful life, to give thanks always for all things. You have had your trials and your troubles; now what? Now get down on your knees and thank God for them. Have you done it? There is a Father in heaven; He has a Son, Jesus Christ, and that Son died for the sins of the world, and wants to be your Savior and my Savior; wants to give you and me His righteousness; He wants us to accept that Son and be saved and call His Father our Father; He wants us, because we have been reconciled to the Father, to learn to love humanity and be kind everywhere, and stop our rebellion. But how is it with some men? They can see nothing in the world to be thankful for, rebelling against everything that happens, ungrateful, breathing God's fresh air, eating His bread, drinking His water, enjoying all the good things that He has given them; they can have ten years of good health and never thank God for it; one day of sickness to them undoes all

the health they have ever had. Oh, unthankful fool! Will you never learn to submit to the will of your God? Will you never learn to enjoy God's blessings and thank Him for them? Will you never see in the Father's face the loving heart of God? Will you never see in Jesus Christ God's love poured out on Calvary for you? Will you never stop rebelling against heaven and all things that are good?

Oh, in conclusion let me say to you, be wise. "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." And what is true wisdom? True wisdom is to confess your sins to God, accept Jesus Christ as your Savior, and by His help try to live every day nearer and nearer to Him in the light of His Holy Word; grow in grace, and knowledge, and strength; sink deeper into the great wisdom of your God; make up your mind to live better day by day as you are growing older, and not only sing, but live, nearer, my God, to Thee nearer to Thee! and at last when your work on earth is all done, find that you have not only been interested in your own soul's salvation but in the salvation of the whole world. This is wisdom. Be wise and be not a fool. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for that plain Word of Thine which has shown us so clearly what true wisdom is, and what the greatest foolishness may be. We pray Thee, dear Father in heaven, that Thou wilt bless this message to our own soul's good. Oh, do Thou give us the vision tonight that can look out beyond our own circle to the ends of the earth. Give us a heart that can plead for a poor, perishing world. Give us a determination not to lose any more time for ourselves nor for those in a lost condition. We ask Thee to bless our friends and our foes. We ask Thee to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, and do Thou lead us in the path of Jesus and in the very center of it, who said, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by Me. Father in heaven, hear our prayer which is now offered in the name of Jesus, who taught us to say:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For

Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.
Amen.

56. The Battle Of Battles.

Twenty-First Sunday After Trinity.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. Eph. 6:10-18.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

WHEN WE LOOK OVER THE HISTORY of the world we find some great battles. Among them in our own country we might mention Gettysburg, where twenty thousand of our Northern soldiers lay in death, and in their own blood; we might thus go on and show you battle after battle; fought in different parts of the world between armies of great numbers; but there is a battle that is greater than all the battles between flesh and blood; it is the battle referred to in our text, where we are admonished to put on the whole armor of God. In order not to take up too much time with an introduction, let us at once plunge into our theme. I speak to you this evening of

The Battle Of Battles

And may the Holy Spirit show each one of us how we can be true soldiers of the cross. With regard to this battle I shall show you:

- I. The armies.
- II. The armor.
- III. The call to arms.

I. The Armies

The Devil's Army

Which are the armies of this great battle of battles? I behold the armies of the devil!

“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

The Apostle Paul recognizes the fact that there is a leading power for evil as well as for good. Paul believes as much in a personal devil as he does in a personal Savior, and this Satan has got an army. He has got an army of the fallen angels; an army of the lost race; and an army of popular society.

We are told in God's Word that Satan fell; that he was a holy angel at one time; that he rebelled against his God and God cast him out of heaven and a host of spirits followed him, and this host of spirits is referred to in this letter of Paul's when he says: “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” This “spiritual wickedness” is correctly translated wicked spirits. We find, therefore, that Satan has a great army of wicked spirits, not in heaven, but in high places. The German Bible says they are “under heaven,” which is by far a more intelligent translation. We find then that the army which we have to fight as soldiers of the cross is not found only walking upon earth, but wherever you can find a fallen angel you find a member of the army of Satan. You remember the story of Job, how Satan tempted him. What did Satan do? He blew his house over with a storm; he caused the fires from

heaven to fall and devour part of his flocks. That same Satan is today yet in the air; he is in high places.

We find then that these powers are around us. Not only are there fallen angels in this great army of Satan, but there is a fallen race. When Paul says here, we wrestle not against flesh and blood – or more correctly against blood and flesh – he does not mean to say that we have no battles on hand with men, but he means to say this, that man today on the side of the devil is not a soldier of the same kind as we fight in battles simply with blood and flesh and nerve and sinew, but that back of all this flesh and blood in the lost man there is the power of Satan to fight. We would not recognize what Paul is trying to bring forth here if we did not see that a wicked man is more than simply flesh and blood. You realize that a child of God is more than flesh and blood; when a man is born again he has the Holy Spirit in him, and having the Holy Spirit in him he is now a three-fold person instead of a two-fold person. When we study man according to the wisdom of the world, we say he is a dual being, having a body and soul, but if you will study the Word of God carefully you will find the child of God is a three-fold being – body, soul and spirit. Now then, when you fight a good man you are not fighting only flesh and blood, but you are fighting God in him; and when you are fighting a wicked man, you are not fighting and wrestling simply with flesh and blood and physical strength, but you are fighting a man who is at enmity against God; you are fighting a man that has the spirit of Satan in him; you are fighting against principalities and powers, and not alone flesh and blood.

The army of Satan, therefore, is largely composed of fallen angels, of wicked men, of unregenerated people; for, my friends, a man is never on God's side until he is born again, and he that is not for Me, says Jesus, is against Me. Away with the idea that you can be a kind of a neutral man, not exactly in the church, not exactly a Christian, but on the other hand you would not be called a child of the devil for anything. Now whoever you are this evening, my friend, whether an acquaintance or a stranger, you are either this evening on the side of God, fighting against sin, or you are on the side of the devil, fighting against God and all things that are good and holy. The man out on the battle field that simply stands up and lets his gun rest on the ground, and that is neither for the north nor for the south, is either for the north or for the south in spite of the fact that he does not do a thing. When I can fight for the north and refuse to do it, I am a soldier for the

south, and when a soldier of the south I refuse to fight against the north, I am a soldier for the north. The man, therefore, that is not fighting for Christ and true Christianity is an enemy of God and a soldier of the devil.

There is still another class that goes to make up this army of Satan, and that is popular society.

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

No one can read that verse carefully without finding that Paul has in mind a class of people that are ruling the world; that stand high in society; that are looked upon as the great leaders; and he says you find among them soldiers of the devil. And isn't it true? Oh, how much we hear about popular society all over this country. Think of those great men of New York that have been going all over the world making their popular speeches at great banquets as the great leaders of society. My dear friends, if Senator Depew were a poor man in Mansfield we would have him down here in prison. If some of those great men who have been looked up to in society where living in any village, they would never be allowed to walk on the streets without the shackles on their arms. The man in Columbus a few years ago who robbed the Fifth Avenue bank of sixty thousand dollars was free in nine months; the man that stole four hams the same day is in the penitentiary yet. Sixty thousand dollars makes a man a man in high places and a rascal that goes free; and the poor man at home that has no right to steal because he is poor, but who will steal at times to get something to eat, receives no consideration nor mercy. There is not a term in all the world today that is doing more to mislead the youth of our land than this simple, plain term, high society. High society today is as low as the gates of hell. There you find the army on the side of Satan.

The Army of God

In opposition to that army is another army, and that is the army of God.

“Put on the whole armor of God.”

God has an army. I do not need to refer to the fact that He Himself is the great general, as Satan is on the other side. You know that; but I want to tell you that God in His army has got a host of holy angels. Only a few fell. It was a great host that sang when Christ was born: "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will toward men!" When you remember that one of those angels alone could kill one hundred and eighty-five thousand soldiers in one night by flying over the valley of Sennacherib, you understand the power of those angels that sang on the plains of Bethlehem when Jesus was born. There is no army of hell that can keep one angel from Christ's grave to roll the stone away. Remember, my friends, that one angel of God has defended the bones of Moses to this day, and all the angels of hell cannot take those bones away from him. God has an army of holy angels that is watching over us today. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews tells us we have a cloud of witnesses over us, and I am satisfied that when Dr. Luther stood there before the Emperor at Worms and said: "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise, God help me!" he had a cloud of God's holy angels over him. I am satisfied when you yourself in God's name are going through life fighting the fight of God that you are never alone; the holy angels are with you.

And just as this army has holy angels in opposition to the fallen angels of Satan, just so God has an army of saved people in opposition to the lost in Satan's army. Yes, my friends, God has a large army. You will remember that when Elijah on Mount Carmel imagined that he was the only man of God in that country, God said, Elijah, there are seven thousand in this country that never bowed their knees to Baal. We some times imagine that after all, God's people are only a few, but remember, two years ago in this own state of ours there was a majority on the Republican side of something like about eighty thousand people, but when God's people came together this year, independent of politics, they brought the majority on the other side up to over forty thousand. I tell you when you arouse the people of God they are a great army, an army of power, and they are going to see on the Judgment day that the victory is theirs. A man, as I said a while ago, that is not for God is against Him; and on the other hand, when a man is not against God he is for Him.

We not only have in this great army over four hundred millions of God's people today, but, dear friends, we have among these people also another class, and that is the true soldier of Christ. Just as soon as a man is born

again he is a child in the army of God. But the Apostle Paul did not direct this text of mine to the little children in the faith; he was speaking here to the heroes, and you will all recognize that there is a difference between Christian and Christian, just as there is a difference in the army between soldier and soldier. We can have a million soldiers under Darius, and we can have something like thirty or forty thousand under Alexander the Great, but there was only one Alexander the Great. We have had many soldiers of our own country, but we have had only one General Grant; we have had only one Sherman that marched to the sea. And thus there are men of God who are a power on the side of God's army. I was reading yesterday the life of a man whose name is not heard very often in these days – Paleario, a man that was born about the year 1500, a man who was one of the greatest martyrs of his day. When he was asked the question, On what do you rest the foundation of your faith, three times he gave the three-fold answer, "On Christ; on Christ; on Christ." He wrote against the darkness of his age until they said, "If you do not stop we will put you in prison." Then that soldier in the town of France was condemned to death, and he wrote this letter to the judge. It seems to me it is one of the most striking letters I ever read, written from prison:

"At such a time as this, my Judge, no Christian should die in bed. To be accused, to be thrown into prison, to be whipped and scourged, to be hanged, to be sown into a sack and thrown to the wild animals to devour me is too small a punishment for me. If it will help spread the truth of Jesus Christ to the world I beg of you, sentence me to roast on the burning coals."

And they roasted him to death in 1570. There is the type of soldier that I have in mind that can be found in God's army. Remember that in three centuries one hundred and eighty millions of men and women laid down their lives for Jesus Christ, and if you think that we have not got men in the present day that would die for Christ, you are mistaken. Let the persecutions come and they would do here in this country as they are doing in Armenia, they would die for their faith. Such soldiers are found in the army of our God.

II. The Armor

Let us notice for a few moments the armor. What is the armor of the devil and what is the armor of God.

The Armor of the Devil

As to the armor of the devil, I should say in the first place it is deception,

“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

If you understand the word “wiles,” it is a term that applies far better to a serpent than to man. The Apostle Paul has here in mind the old serpent in the Garden of Eden, how that serpent crept in there and pretended to know more than God himself, and thus led our parents astray. Oh, says Paul, I want you to understand that that old serpent is still in our midst. That old serpent with his deception is misleading and deceiving us, making us think we are doing good when we are serving him.

I am holding up to you the armor of the devil. When he wants you and me to sin he does not come as we have seen him pictured, with hoofs and horns, saying, I am Mr. Devil and I want you to go and do wrong. When he wants you and me to sin he comes and says, You cannot help this; this is reasonable; this is right; don't you see it is the thing to do? Now listen to me and do it; there may be a little something wrong about it, but there is a little right about it; you go ahead. And then we go and plunge deeper and deeper into sin, and the old devil stands back and laughs, and says, God, look, there is one of your so called Christians. Satan comes to you every time and says, You are right; do this and I will show you a better way; eat the forbidden fruit and you will get your eyes open and you will know things as gods. Yes, the poor darkened, deceived souls of the world suffering today, yet thinking they have their eyes opened when they are closed in darkness.

Not only do we find that this armor consists of deception, but furthermore of darkness. “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” There is nothing that Satan loves so much as darkness. He is the king of darkness. He comes from the realm of darkness, and if he can just keep the people ignorant of God's Holy Word, he has them in darkness; if he can just drive them out of

the Church of God he has them in darkness; if he can just make them believe they have a good reason for being away from the truth, he has them in darkness; if he can just make the young man believe, Now it is dark, he is ready to sin. And I would give a word of admonition to you parents, see to it that your lights are burning. I would give you a word of advice concerning your own home, see to it that no later than eleven o'clock your doors are closed and your virgin daughters are sleeping in bed under the protection of the holy angels. See to it that this king of darkness is not fitting his armor on you that is going to lead you to destruction.

He has not only his armor of darkness, but of destruction.

“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”

In ancient times, in times of war, very often the army would gather up large cane stalks, and then put tow and combustibles on the end of that cane and shoot the shaft into the air, burning; and the enemy, standing, looking at these burning shafts going into the air, thought, How beautiful! Then they turned and came down into their city and burned them up. There is the picture the apostle has in mind, of Satan. Understand he has some fiery darts. Sometimes he comes in darkness, sometimes with deception; sometimes he comes out boldly and takes his shaft of fire and says to the Christian: You have sinned against the light and there is no hope for you any more; you are damned surely, and so shoots the fiery dart. Sometimes he comes to those who would love to repent and says: What is the use for you to repent? You are as good as all the rest; and shoots his fiery dart. Sometimes he comes and says: You don't need to believe this old Bible any more; and shoots his fiery dart. Sometimes he comes with a provocation and says: Now then, stand up for your rights; get up and walk out of the Sunday School; walk out of the church; go home; and the devil has shot his fiery dart. Be careful about these fiery darts. They are the very armor of Satan.

The Armor of God

See next the armor of God. Do not depend upon yourself. When David was to fight with Goliath they brought to him a large armor. Oh, he said, I

cannot fight in this thing; I am not used to it; I will go out in the armor of my God; and in the name of the God of Israel he picked up the pebbles and threw them, and struck the giant down and cut his head off. He had the armor of God on, not the armor of some worldly king. So the first thing we want to do is to put on the armor of God.

Not only put it on, but put on the whole armor. In ancient times you remember people covered their bodies with an armor to protect them from the enemy. They would wear on their heads an helmet; they would wear around their bodies a girdle; they would put on large boots and greaves to cover their limbs and feet; they would put on a breast plate that extended around and covered their backs; they would take a shield in one hand and a spear in the other, and go to war. Now, says Paul, I want you to understand, if you want to fight this fight on God's side, you, too, must have suitable weapons. Put on the whole armor here described; three kinds of weapons: First, three integuments: Girdle around the body, shoes on the feet and the breastplate of righteousness. "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Oh, my dear friends, that is the kind of integument to put on.

See that you have around you the girdle of truth. How many people will lie to make a dollar; how many people will lie to make a little bargain; how many people there are that have no regard for the exact truth. You cannot be a soldier in God's army if you are not willing to tell the truth if the heavens fall. That is the girdle you must wear.

And then you must have the breastplate of righteousness. The English language is not able to give the right meaning of the Greek word thorax, which means not only a shield for the breast, but extends around on the back, so that no difference whether the enemy is in front or back of you, he cannot thrust his sword into your body. And thus, says the Apostle Paul, you want to wear your shield, a breastplate of righteousness that not only covers you in front, but runs all around you; and when you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him, He says. My righteousness is yours, and He puts it over you and covers your sins, and you stand in the sight of the Holy God as holy as Jesus Christ Himself, not because you are flesh and blood, but because you have the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is perfect. Wear that garment and then you will be putting on the whole armor.

And then have for your shoes the gospel of peace. How many people are really wearing gospel shoes? They are perfectly willing to take their shoes and go to a dance, to run on any forbidden path, to gad around where they should not be, but how many Christians are there today that are wearing out their shoe soles to save souls, to bring the Gospel to the poor, the lost and the dying? If you want to be a soldier in God's army, wear the Gospel shoes of peace. Instead of trying to stir up an enemy and make trouble, try to cause peace, and not only the peace between man and man, but between man and God.

Then when you have put on these three integuments, take two defensive weapons. "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation."

Have the shield of faith. Oh, that we had more faith in God. When you read the New Testament through carefully you will find that Christ is constantly rebuking His disciples because of their little faith; and when Satan comes to us, what shall we do when he hurls one of those fiery darts at us? What shall we do? Like the ancients, hold up the shield. The old shield of the Romans was some four feet by two and a quarter; it was oval shaped so that when the darts came, no difference what direction they came from, it glanced off one way or the other; and thus he would stand, turning the darts away with the shield in one hand, and with the sword in the other hand he would fight. O man of God, when Satan comes and says, You poor, lost, condemned sinner, there is no hope for you, hold up the shield and say to him, "Him that Cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Away, ye fiery darts! When Satan comes to you and says you do not need to repent, hold up the shield and say: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven it at hand!" And thus go on through life, holding the shield in one hand, and on your head the helmet of salvation.

You must defend your head when you go to war, and the best helmet you can have is the helmet of salvation. You understand that when the old soldier used to wear the helmet, it was impossible for any one to strike his brain with the sword; but Paul says. Away with the old helmet of steel; what you want is the salvation of Christ, to know that you are saved; and then, if we are saved, who can hurt us? How could they hurt Paul's head if they would cut it off when the holy angels took it and put the crown of eternal

life on it? How could they hurt you and me when we are children of God? Why do I need to fear death, or anything, or anybody when I am true to my God? When you have the defensive shield in the one hand, and the helmet of salvation on your head, you can go through life and fear neither death, the devil, nor hell.

But we are not only to have defensive weapons; we are also to have offensive weapons. Paul not only said to take the helmet of salvation, but he went on to say:

“And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”

I tell you the Bible is the greatest sword ever given to the world. It is not the sword of steel, but the sword of the Spirit. It is God’s sword. Whenever you have the Bible in your hand you have the sword of the Almighty God. When Christ was tempted, what did Satan do? Satan asked Him three times to do this and that, and what was the response? Jesus said: It is written; it is written; it is written. And with those three strokes He drove Satan away. That is the reason that these little children should be well catechized; that is the reason they should learn Bible verses, and have the Word of God in their minds. What good does your Bible do in your home, if you leave it down on the table and do not know what is in it? When Satan comes around and strikes at you, how are you going to strike back unless you have the Word of God in your heart and mind? That is why I say we should commit Bible verses. When Jesus said, “It is written: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve,” then Satan was repulsed. And when he comes to you and to me and we take the sword of the Spirit in our hands and strike at him, that is one thing the devil cannot stand – God’s holy Word.

There is not only the sword of the Spirit, but you will find in times of war that frequently they throw large shells over into the city and burn it. In this great war which we have against Satan, we have no weapon of steel; we have no bombs to throw over into the city, no shells of any kind, but there is something else we can do. “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” Then let us remember that while we cannot throw a shell into the city, we can throw a prayer to heaven, and when we call upon God to help us in this great battle of ours, He throws help down from on high.

These enemies, angels of the devil, are in high places, but they are not in heaven; they are in high places, but not as high as the power of God, and from heaven on high, God will give us angels and His help. Therefore, use these weapons, and when you have the strength of God in you, then fight.

III. The Call To Arms

Now we have seen the armor, at last I would cry out with the Apostle Paul, To arms! to arms! You know the army; you know the armor; what is our duty? Our duty is to fight in the name of the Lord and by the power of His might.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.”

Finally, after I have told you, says the Apostle Paul, as God’s standing army, of your divine election, after I have exhorted you to unity and holiness and love, after I have spoken to you of the duty of wives and of husbands, and children and parents, after I have told you all this, finally it is time for war. Finally, to arms! Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. And do not think for a moment that these phrases are one equivalent to the other. There is quite a difference between being strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Why is it that so many Christians fall? It is because they are depending upon their own strength. And Paul here says, see to it that you get your strength from God – in the strength of the Lord. In the second place, he says, when you have got God’s strength, then use it in the power of His might. So you see the difference. The one is the storehouse of power; the other is the power put into execution. And so I would urge upon you this morning, to arms, my Christian soldiers. First of all, give up your own power. Give up the idea that you can fight this battle in your Own power. That is where you have missed it before; that is where I have missed it before; I have said, I am a strong man; I have been on God’s side all my life; there is no danger; and the first thing we know what are we doing? Blundering here and there. What is the trouble? We have depended upon our own strength of flesh and blood instead of getting the power of God Himself. It is God’s war, it is not ours; and being God’s war, let us, in the first place, get our strength. How shall we get it?

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.”

There is the secret of victory. When you have got God’s power, then stand. We are told time and again by the apostle to be sure and stand.

“Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

In this army of God there is no use to retreat, no use to turn back. If we were fighting with flesh and blood or with our own power, we would have to retreat; but when we stand here in the power of our God, then stand, because Almighty God never needs to retreat.

Not only stand, but strike. Oh, what a power there is in wielding this sword. I do not believe we wield this power as much as we ought. In this great battle we ought to be progressing. That army that is satisfied with standing on the same battle field all the time isn’t worth being called an army. When the Japanese went on to conquer, they marched forward in the midst of rain, and wind and storm, pressing on until Russia was conquered. And just so my friends, in this great battle of ours; having the power of God it is our duty not only to stand, but to press forward and take the sword of the Spirit and strike and cut down until the enemy falls.

I know very well what some of you are thinking this evening. I can tell what people are thinking about when they sit before me. Some people wish this evening that our pastor hadn’t said what he did about popular society and the dance, etc., but I mean to press forward; I mean to strike and strike hard, and when I see sin covered up by delusions of the devil, I am going to cut to the heart, because we never will think until our eyes are opened; and the thing for us to do is to know we are right, and when we know, strike with all the power of Almighty God, and the victory will be ours. It is bound to come. It is not as some people think that we make progress in spite of our weakness. If I had come here some two or three years ago and just said some nice little things, I would have entertained you for a day or two, and you would have gone home and you would be there this evening. You would not have been in the house of God. God’s truth is a sharp Sword, and it cuts to the marrow and to the bone; and if we are going to fight this fight of God; if we are going to fight this battle of battles, we must not ask, what does this man or that man think. This thing of playing around with the

truth will do no good. Swords are made to cut and slash and they must cut and slash until men can see their wickedness and see the wiles of the devil, and come out on the side of God.

Finally, says Paul, finally – Paul could not be with this people for life; he had fought until he was near the end of his course, but he says. My dear Ephesians, the church for which I have prayed and worked so hard, needs you as soldiers; put on the armor; fight; strike hard; press on to victory. The victory is coming, and it will come. Only a few more years, my friends, and this battle will be over, but remember, the hardest time of battle is just before the victory. You men who fought on that field at Gettysburg, don't you remember how you fought in the last moments, when at times you almost felt as if the flag must come down; but once more you struck and the victory came! And so it will be with us. Do not think because you are an old Christian that your temptations are over. The devil does not care how true you are to your church, how true you are to the Bible, how true to your Sunday school, the first ten years, or the next ten years; he does not care if you are true to the last week; if the devil were sure that you and I would come over on his side the last day of our lives, he would say. Let's have a prayer meeting and call upon God today; anything, just so he gets the victory at last. Oh, I urge upon you aged fathers and mothers, don't think you are safe because father and mother were; don't think you are safe because you helped build a big church; don't think you are safe because you have battled so long; what are you going to do from now until you die? Onward! Upward, in the name of God Almighty, until the gates of heaven are opened and you are safe at home, and the angels are singing, Victory! Victory! Victory! The battle is over!

Prayer

O God, our Father in heaven: We thank Thee for this hour; we thank Thee for this blessed privilege of speaking of the two great armies, but Thine, O God, is the great army, for Thou hast the armor of light, and Thou has called To arms! May every one in this house this evening' take up his arms and fight the battle of battles. We ask this in Jesus' name, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

57. The First Foreign Missionary. *Twenty-Second Sunday After Trinity.*

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God. Phil. 1:3-11.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

IT IS HARD FOR US in this civilized land of Christian churches to realize how Asia could send a foreign missionary to Europe, and yet there was a day when Europe was all heathen; there was a day when only the aborigines were in this land; there was a day when Saul, now called Paul, saw in the night a vision of a man standing before him saying. Come over into Macedonia and help us; and he immediately recognized the fact that it was his duty to leave Asia and go to Europe as a foreign missionary. The first church that he established on European soil was in the city of Philippi, and the letter which I have selected my text from was a letter to that first foreign mission church in the world. I call your attention tonight to this first foreign mission, because I find it the church which Paul loved above all other churches. It was what we ministers call our first love, as far as

congregations are concerned. There was something about that church at Philippi that appealed to Paul's big heart. It was the first church that he established according to his own notion of a real Christian church. He was now away from the thralldom of the Holy Land; he was away from the prejudices of false notions about true religion, among a set of heathen, where he could establish the church as he knew it should be. There is something grand and noble in the little missions which we have established ourselves, which we have built up according to our idea of a Christian congregation. When we step into an old congregation we always find a great many old notions that people are bound to cling to just because they are old notions, and there is no other reason for it; but when we establish a church of our own, on the Rock of Ages, the people are willing to accept whatever appears as truth and is excellent, and the consequence in this case was that the apostle Paul established a church which appealed to him and he appealed to it as long as he lived. "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the Gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." In these few words you find the apostle Paul's great heart resting upon that foreign mission, and may we this evening, as we sit here in this great house of God, learn from that first foreign missionary what an ideal church should be.

The First Foreign Missionary

We find what the ideal church should be by knowing

- I. Its creed.
- II. Its cost.

I. Its Creed

What was the creed of the first foreign mission church in Europe? It is not hard to tell what the creed was. Paul says:

"Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the Gospel from the first day until now."

Fellowship in the Gospel. What is the Gospel? The Gospel is the glad tidings that Jesus Christ has come into the world to save sinners and through faith to make us forever blessed. The apostle Paul believed in the Apostles' Creed. He believed in making diligent use of the means of grace, for remember, where the Gospel is preached, there we must find the means of grace. How did Paul go to Europe to establish the church? He went there with the Word of God; he went there with the sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and these are the means of grace which brought to that dark and perishing world the everlasting Gospel in which they had fellowship with each other.

1. Holy Baptism

It is not hard to see that the apostle Paul laid great stress upon Holy Baptism. If you will read the sixteenth chapter of Acts where he founded this church at Philippi, you will soon understand what I am saying. When he came to that city he found a very cold reception, until he happened to hear that down along a certain stream on a Sabbath day there were a few women who were trying the best they knew how to worship God. It is true those women had no correct conception of the Triune God; they knew nothing, or very little, about the story of Christ, but they did know that there was a God, and they did know that God should be worshiped, and so they went beyond the gates, where alone they could have under the blue skies of heaven, a communion with their God. Paul went out where those women were, and the first woman to take the Gospel of Christ was Lydia. Lydia opened the door of missions in Europe. What a comfort it ought to be to all the Christian women in this congregation tonight to know that it was through a woman that the Gospel of Christ was introduced into Europe. Lydia heard the Word of God with gladness.

And what did Lydia then do? She obeyed the sermon of the apostle Paul and was immediately baptized, and her whole household. That is the kind of people I love.

This way of conducting the Christian church, of having fathers here and mothers there, and a son here, and a daughter there in the church is not apostolic. The first mission church consisted of the mother, the parents and the children, and the servants, all coming into the house of God. In that same chapter we read that in a very short time the apostle's preaching was

arousing the very Satan in the minds of the people. One man said. If this man keeps on preaching here I will lose my trade; and so there was a great stir in the city, and they got this little apostle that came over from Troas and striped his back until the blood ran from it, and then they took him to the prison, and they threw him into the inner prison, and put his feet in the stocks and said, Now we will see if we cannot shut your mouth; and they slammed the door of his prison. But there was another man with him – Silas – and there they sat with their feet in the stocks; they could not sleep, and at midnight Paul said to Silas, Let's sing. Oh, I wish I could have heard that duet. I would today travel many miles to hear those two men sing in that midnight hour, with their feet in the stocks, in the city of Philippi. They were establishing their first mission in Europe, and when they began to sing it seems to me that I can hear the very Father in heaven saying. Ye angels, listen! There is a duet down in Philippi in the heathen land, by two men sung to the praise of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. And I hear the very Father in heaven saying, Michael, fly with all your power; go, and shake that prison until the doors fly open, and shake those stocks until the prisoners are free, and break the chains of every prisoner, until at last the jailer observing what is happening, with wan face cries out and says, I will take my life! Paul says. Do thyself no harm; we are all here. Then the man realizes he is in the presence of Almighty God and cries out: Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Paul and Silas said: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And then he washed the stripes off of his back and took him the same hour of the night and baptized him and his whole household. That is the kind of a creed I love, that is not satisfied with the salvation of one man in the family and the rest going to the devil; not satisfied with father and mother baptized, and the children growing up like weeds. Whenever you find Paul establishing a church, he begins with the parents, and is not satisfied until the whole household belongs to the church of God. You would almost suppose Paul was a Lutheran, wouldn't you? That is good Lutheran doctrine; that is Bible doctrine; that was the doctrine of the first mission in Europe.

Not only did they celebrate this wonderful sacrament of Holy Baptism there, but they laid much stress upon the preaching of God's Word. Remember, my friends, that the apostle Paul was the man who said, I am determined to know nothing among you but Christ and Him crucified. The Word of God is the lamp that lights our feet and shows us the way to go.

The Word of God is the voice of the Holy Spirit. It is the sword of the Spirit, as we heard last Sunday evening, that cuts to the very heart, and if we ever expect to make Christians of the world, we must proclaim the law and the Gospel in which the people are to have fellowship and find Christ their Savior. And so in this great first mission we find that the Word of God is precious. They longed to hear this old apostle preach the mighty story of the cross on Calvary.

You will not forget that just below Philippi lies the city of Corinth. You will remember that the apostle Paul, when he found that the Corinthians were not making a correct use of the Lord's Supper, wrote them a strong letter and told them what great revelation he had received from heaven, that when Christ said. This is My body. He meant it; and when He said. This is My blood, He meant it. In that first foreign mission we find the Lord's Supper, the fellowship of the Gospel, in which Christ comes to give Himself to those true Christians. No wonder Paul loved that first mission. They made diligent use of the means of grace.

2. True Conversion

I find the creed of that first mission also laid great stress upon true conversion.

“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the Gospel, ye are all partakers of my grace.”

The apostle Paul not only called attention to the fact that they were to use the means of grace in that first mission, but they also received the grace. Now a man may go to church all the days of his life; he may hear the Word of God; he may even be baptized; he may even go to the Lord's Supper; he may make use of all the means of grace, and at the same time turn his hardened heart against the reception of that grace. What good does it do you tonight to sit here and hear God's truth and make up your minds you will not receive it? I have heard men say, what is the use to baptize a little infant? That little infant may grow up and go to hell. Why yes, and so may you, old sinner. Have you never seen old babes baptized that rejected their

baptism and went to destruction? But let me go a step further. You all admit that the Word of God is a power; you admit that the Word of God is a means of grace, and do you not know many people that sit down year after year and hear God's Word, and they are the same old sinners they have always been? Why? Because they hear the Word of God but they do not accept it. God does not take a man by the back of the neck and force him into the kingdom of heaven. He says, Here are the means of grace. Because there is a fountain coming out of the hill and you sit down below it and will not drink, is no sign the water is not good. Because you refuse to eat when the table is covered with food, is no sign that the food isn't good. And because you will sit down and listen to God's Word but will not accept it, is no sign that the Word of God is not a power. The apostle Paul calls attention to the fact that the little first mission at Philippi not only made use of the means of grace, but accepted the grace. When Paul said to them, This is the Word of God, they said Amen to it. When Paul said to them that they should be baptized and have their children baptized, and their servants, they said, We will do it, and the first two families in Europe all became Christians and accepted Jesus Christ. The members of that little mission said, Paul, if you have got a blessing we want it; if you know something of God's Word that we do not know, we want to hear it and accept it; if there is a blessing in the Lord's Supper we want it often; and so Paul writes to them and says, I have got you in my heart; ye are all partakers of my grace; my Savior is your Savior; my forgiveness is your forgiveness; my hope is your hope; my heaven is your heaven; you are converted Christians. Would to God that more church members today were converted Christians.

What do I mean by that? I mean exactly what God's Word means by conversion. Conversion means to repent of our sins and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as our own personal Savior. How can you, my dear hearers, be satisfied with your sinful life? How can you be satisfied with a single sin unforgiven? How can you be satisfied with the uncertainty of salvation? How can you be satisfied with yourself when you know that you are at enmity against God? How can you be satisfied with yourself when you know that you are in rebellion against the truth? Oh, dear friends, open your eyes and see that you are a sinner, that the curse of God rests upon all sinners until they accept the atonement of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, that died on Calvary's hill. When you realize that you yourself have driven the nails into the hands and feet of Jesus Christ; when you realize that it was

your sins that scourged His back and slapped Him in the face, and spit in His face, and buffeted Him, and when you realize that it was your sin and mine that crushed the cruel crown of thorns down upon His head; when you realize that He, the innocent Lamb of God, should not have died, and that you should have been in His place, that He became your substitute, the Lamb of God that beareth away the sins of the world, then you will begin to see your sins in a light you never did before. Then you will say. Oh, my God, what shall I do? Then the answer will come that came to the first church at Philippi, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house. Then your determination will be to forsake your sinful life and to walk in the footprints of the great Son of God, and you will try your best every day to do more and more for Him who died for you. This is conversion. That is the kind of people that were in the first mission in Europe; they partook of the grace of the apostle Paul.

3. Growing Sanctification

They were not only truly converted Christians and believed in the true and living God, but they furthermore were a people who believed in growing sanctification.

“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”

In the sixth verse he said: “Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Now that little mission up at Philippi did not have old established Christians right in the beginning. They were new members and their knowledge was very limited, but they had accepted Jesus Christ fully, they had accepted the means of grace fully; they wanted every blessing that they could get, and Paul said. Now I hope that you will abound more and more, that you will grow, and the God that began this work in you, He will be able to finish it. And thus this church had in its creed sanctification.

What do I mean by sanctification? I mean that when we have been saved by the grace of God that we should day by day try our best to step a plane

higher in the Christian life. That does not mean that we should be proud Pharisees; it does not mean that we cannot grow, for we are told in God's Word that a man must grow on as long as he lives; even the apostle Paul never claimed to be perfect in this world. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." With a pastor like the apostle Paul, realizing his imperfections, but every day pressing forward and higher, that little mission at Philippi was a mission of sanctification.

That mission was not afraid to pray. In the nineteenth verse he says: "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." No difference where Paul was, he remembered that his little church up at Philippi was praying for him. It was about nine years later that he wrote this letter, from the time he was in the stocks in the jail, but he said. No difference where I go, I know I have a little praying mission up in Europe that is not forgetting me. Oh, what a glorious thing it is for a pastor to know that his people are praying for him! May your prayers ascend tonight to the throne of God in behalf of him who is proclaiming the everlasting Gospel to you now.

Not only was that a church that was praying; it was a church that was full of love. "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more." Oh, how the little church loved Paul! No difference where he was they sent letters to him, and sent gifts, and told him that they were praying for him. He could not forget that love. They loved their own members; they loved their enemies; they loved their friends; they loved missionary work. Whenever you want to find a church that has the true missionary spirit, you have got to find one that itself was established with the missionary spirit. Whenever a church has no foreign missionary spirit in it, it simply will die. You show me a congregation that is satisfied simply with having a sermon every Sunday, with a few of its own members there, not caring how anybody else will get along, that church is bound to go down and die. The church of God that will prosper is like the little church down at Philippi. No sooner had they established a church there, than these dear Christian people said: Paul, we are only a few people here; down here is Corinth and here is the great country of Europe, all heathen; tell them the story of God's love. And when Paul said, I am a poor man, how can I go? they reached into their pockets and gave of their poverty, and said: Go on out and tell the story of

Christ wherever you can. Paul went away, but he never forgot their love, and he said, I want you to grow in sanctification. I want you as a church to be progressive. If there is anything excellent, accept it; if there is anything that will give you more knowledge, accept it; if there is anything that will lead you further on, go on; learn more and more, and your judgment will become brighter and brighter; and as you go on in your progress the day will come when you and I shall have reached the mark for which we are pressing in this life through sanctification.

Not only were they a church of love, but as a church they were very benevolent. That little church at Philippi was the grandest church Paul ever established in its liberality. When he writes to the Corinthians and wants to hold up to them the model church of the world, he speaks of the little church at Macedonia, the little church which out of their poverty gave for the riches of Christ. He holds up that church as the model for all Christian churches in their liberality. In the same letter he writes these words: "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all and abound. I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Now unto God and our Father be glory forever and ever. Amen." Thus he closed that great letter of his to the first foreign mission in Europe.

II. Its Cost

I have now shown you in a few words the creed of that first mission. Let us now ask the question, What was the cost? The cost of that mission. Very frequently you hear people say that it does not pay to establish missions; they are too costly. It might be well therefore, to ask the question, what did the first foreign mission cost? Let us ask Paul, What did it cost? Well, I can hear the apostle soliloquizing like this: I might have been a wealthy lawyer; I might have been a great philosopher and lived in luxury, but when I came to Europe as a foreign missionary it was the greatest enterprise of my life.

My dear friends, have you ever stopped to realize what it meant for the apostle Paul to leave Troas and go to Europe, where Alexander the Great met Darius with his millions of an army? But Alexander the Great had at least thousands of well equipped soldiers; but here is a little man in his little bark sailing across the Aegean Sea, a lonely soldier of Christ, to conquer all Europe. What did it cost him? Without one cent of salary, without a home to go to, with only a voice saying. Come over to Macedonia and help us, he starts out, and in a very short time, as I told you a while ago, if you want to find Paul, where would you hunt for him? Where is the man Paul, Mr. Ruler? Oh, we just scourged him yesterday until we cut his back until the blood was running off of him in streams. What did you do with him? You will find him down there in the jail. We will go down to the jail and look around and say. Where is Paul? Got him back there in the corner of the inner prison. I walk back, and the first thing I see is four feet extended toward me, two of Paul and two of Silas. I say, Paul, what are you doing here? I am paying the price for this first mission. Are you getting enough to eat? No, sir. Are you sore? Oh, I should say so; my back does hurt. Well, how are you going to get out of this? Never mind, God will help us. And so that night God shook the jail and helped them out. I follow Paul for the next year of his life, and I find him down in the prison at Rome, and I say, Paul, how do you like this work? Well, I expect some of these days they will take me out of this world, and I am not caring very much; I have told Europe all I could about Christ. For me to live is Christ and to die is gain; I am perfectly willing to lay down my life. And then at last I see them going out in a crowd from the great city of Rome. I say, What is going on? Someone says, They are going to take that little hump-backed Jew and cut his head off. I watch them as they lay him on the block and with the knife cut his head off; and as his head drops into the bag and I there see the blood stream out of his little body, I ask myself the question, What did that first mission cost? And there comes an answer back from the dripping blood: The life of the best man since the days of Christ. That is what the first mission cost.

Is that all? I go to my Father in heaven in prayer and I say: O Father in heaven, what did that first mission cost? And I hear Him say: It cost the life of my Son, Jesus Christ. I go to Calvary's hill, and I see men gathering around there, and I see them lift up one of the grandest looking men that ever walked on earth; He is the God-man; I see them there in all the cruelty of their Satanic hearts, drive the nails through His hands and His feet; I see

Him hanging there for three long hours in the burning sun; there is no question about who this is; it is Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. That noon the sun goes down and I peer through the darkness; He is there yet; and there I find Him treading all alone the wine press of God's wrath in the very bitterness of hell, and I hear him moan and groan as the bloody gore drips down from that cross, and I say, What art Thou doing. Thou Lamb of God? And I hear Him say: I am paying the price for the first mission in Philippi. I hear Him say: My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken Me? He is now bearing your curse, and mine, in the very abyss of hell. And at last the Father shows His face, and the Son says: Into Thy hands I commit My Spirit. And He bows His head and dies. It is finished. You are redeemed. I am redeemed. The price is paid for the first mission at Philippi. That is what foreign missions cost. But I am not done yet.

The man who cannot read history as it is connected in golden links for thousands of years is blind to the truth. I ask myself the question: Where did this great man Paul come from? And I hear him say in this letter:

“Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee.”

What? This man Paul that came as a foreign missionary, an offspring of Benjamin? And, Benjamin, where didst thou come from? And I go back into history and I find a man named Jacob, who married Leah and loved Rachel. God in His infinite wisdom at last said, Jacob, Rachel shall be yours. Rachel prayed and prayed that she might give to the world a son, but for a long time it looked as though her prayers were not heard; but at last God said to her, Now thou shalt bear a son; and she called his name Joseph; and that man Joseph has played a great and prominent part in the conversion of the world. When that little boy was born prophetically Rachel said, I shall bear another. For a long time it looked as though it were not true. God said to Jacob: Go and hunt up the place where you one time put your head upon a stone and looked up to heaven and saw the ladder, a very type of Christ. And then he started back for Bethel, on the road that leads to Bethlehem; and when he came down there, then Rachel said, I will give to the world another son. Yes, Rachel gave to the world a great son. But when that son was being born, Rachel was dying. A child coming into the world, a mother going to heaven. Her last words as Benjamin came into the world

were “Ben-oni” – in our own language. The son of my right hand; or, in another place, The son of my pain; the child for which I lived, and the child for which I died, and I say to poor Rachel as she lies there dying by the side of her second born son: What have you done? And she says: I have given to the world a boy that shall bring into the world a Saul; a Saul who shall become a Paul; a Paul who shall teach Lydia and open the door for Christ into Europe and to the world; I have given my life for the first foreign mission in Europe.

Do missions pay? Ask the civilized lands of the world. I know that the first foreign mission cost the life of Paul and cost the life of Jesus Christ, and cost the life of Rachel, but I want you to understand that it was the greatest investment ever made and the best. If you were to ask today, Why is it that this country is such a great country, you would have to trace America, with all her splendid inventions and her great institutions of learning, back to the doors of Europe; and if you were to trace our civilization and our glorious liberty back over the seas, you would come to Scotland, and to England, down through Germany, down to the church at Philippi, down to little Paul, who preached the mighty Gospel in the first foreign mission of the world.

My dear friends, had it not been for that first foreign mission at Philippi, all Europe would be heathen today; and if Europe were heathen today, America would be in darkness; and if America and Europe were in darkness today, what would poor, blind Asia and Africa do? The world would be in ignorance. That first foreign mission was the door of the civilization and the Christianization of the world, and all Europe today, and all America today, sends forth one great voice of thanksgiving to God, and to Paul, for the first foreign mission at Philippi.

Did it pay? Go back and ask the heathen lands of the world. In the days of Paul Asia did not realize what she did. When Asia gave up Paul she gave up her light. When she sent Paul over to Philippi, she said. Goodbye light; goodbye civilization. And then that light began to go westward, and northward, and further westward, until it is going around on the other side of the great world, and coming back to where it started. My dear friends, the only solution for Asia and all the Oriental countries is the mission at Philippi, and the day is soon coming when Asia must have the civilization of America and of the world, which came through the open door of Philippi.

It seems to me I ought to ask of heaven tonight. Did it pay? Do you and I realize as we are sitting and standing in this church tonight, that our forefathers were all in darkness? Do we realize what would have happened our forefathers if it hadn't been for the little mission in that city? And since that day millions and millions of Europeans have fallen asleep in Christ; since that day in our own dear land where the cross was planted when Christopher Columbus came here, millions and millions of our fathers and mothers, of our brothers and sisters, of our dear little children, have gone home; and if I were to go up to heaven tonight and ask the question, Did that mission pay at Philippi? there would be a song going through the very corridors of heaven: Yes, it paid. If it had not been for that mission we would all have been in darkness.

May we this day realize what it means to have a foreign mission in these days in a foreign land. May we realize how thankful we ought to be to God for the apostle Paul who brought the light to our fathers, that we are not heathen. You may talk all you please about the church of God and about the good old Bible, but I want you to understand that if you don't like the church and don't like the Bible, there are places in the world yet where you can find eight hundred millions of people who are living in total darkness, and they would be glad to eat you tomorrow morning for breakfast. Why don't you leave this country? Why don't you go out of this Christian land? The answer comes from heaven tonight which says it pays. It pays to establish the Christian church in any community. May God's rich blessing rest upon you all this evening, and may you thank God, and when the call comes to us to send forth the truth to other lands, have the spirit of the apostle Paul that says: I have not got the money, but I am willing to give myself, even though they put my feet in the stocks, and take off my head; I will give them the truth if it costs my life. That is the true missionary spirit. May God bless these words to our eternal good. Amen.

Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, Thou God of Jacob, we thank Thee that Thou didst give through that dearly beloved Rachel a Benjamin to this world; and we thank Thee that Thou didst give through Jacob a Judah to the world; and

through that man called Israel came forth the great Savior on the one hand, and the great apostle on the other.

And we thank Thee, heavenly Father, that Thou didst see fit in Thy Providence, to bring the apostle Paul over to Macedonia, and thereby open the door which has brought the Gospel light into our own country and into our own homes. Oh, do Thou make us all totally ashamed of ourselves tonight, if we have ever said one word against Christian missions; if we have ever said one word against the Holy Bible; if we have ever said one word against true Christian people; O God, make us heartily ashamed of ourselves, and help us tonight to give ourselves totally, just as we are, into the hands of a merciful Savior. Lord our God, do Thou bless the message of the day, and now as we are about to leave this house of God, may we go to our homes fully determined that every father and every mother, every son and every daughter and every servant shall be a child of God. O Father in heaven, have mercy on those families where children of the devil are sleeping in the beds of Christian people. O God, help that our prayers may come to Thy throne, asking, and seeking, and knocking, until the children of men shall be the children of God. All these favors we ask in the name of the blessed Savior who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation;_ But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

58. Was Paul Popular? *Twenty-Third Sunday After Trinity.*

Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things.) For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. Phil. 3:17-21.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

IF I WERE TO ASK YOU this evening who was one of the greatest men that ever lived, I think I could possibly get a large percentage to say the apostle Paul. Moses was a great man; so was Elijah; so was Daniel; so was John the Baptist; so was Dr. Luther; but it is a question whether there ever was a greater man in every respect than Saul of Tarsus, who after his conversion was called Paul. Now the question arises, if Paul was such a great man, was he popular? and the answer comes back, Yes, and No. Every great man among some people has been popular; among others he has been very unpopular. Was there ever a more unpopular man than Moses in the wilderness at times? and yet he was one of the most popular of men at other times. Daniel was very unpopular when they put him into the lion's den, and yet he was a very popular man in Babylon. John the Baptist was a very popular man when the people came from all sides to hear him preach down at the Jordan, and yet when he was put into prison and his head cut off at the request of the daughter of Herodias, he was a very unpopular man. Luther was a very popular man. All Europe wanted to hear him, and yet he had to take his flight to the Wartburg to escape for his life. Paul was a very

popular man among some people; among others he was not. The question therefore this evening will be

Was Paul Popular?

And the answer will be:

- I. No.
- II. Yes.

I. No

Notice that he was very unpopular. Satan hated him; the world had no use for him; the Jews did not love him; and many professed Christians did not care for him.

Satan Hated Him

In Saul of Tarsus going to Damascus to persecute the Christians, we have as good a picture of a child of the devil as you can find. He was filled with wrath against the church of God. His object was to catch Christians wherever he could and put them into prison. He was an honest man, but an unpopular man in the face of Christianity and very popular with the devil. When, then, Christ called from the clouds and said: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" and started him on the right path and showed him the folly of fighting against the true and living God, sent him to the street called Straight, and there sent the messenger to say, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins," and the scales fell from his eyes, and he saw the real truth, and came out on the side of God, from that moment on he was very unpopular with the devil, and from that day on Satan persecuted Paul wherever he could, until, like his great Master, his life was given up.

The World Had No Use For Him

We find furthermore that Paul was very unpopular with the world at large. The world had no use for Paul when he became a Christian. When he came

up on Mars Hill and saw there an altar to the Unknown God, and began to proclaim that unknown God as the true and living God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the world had no use for him. The world said. We have our false gods and you try to cast them down; we have our notions about purity and you have got yours; we want to live a life of sin and lust and you condemn us; everything that we want to do is condemned by you, little Paul; we will take you and put you into prison, and whip you, and tie you, and see if we cannot get rid of you. The world said, Paul, you are a very unpopular man.

The Jews Did Not Love Him

And how about the Jews, his own people, did they not turn against him? Why did Paul become the missionary to the heathen? Because his own people would have nothing to do with him; they would refuse to hear him; it made them angry, and many a Jew today yet has no use for Paul because he left their religion and became a follower of Jesus Christ.

Many Professed Christians Did Not Care For Him

And how about his own followers? How about the professed Christians of that day? Even they did not always agree with Paul. Why could he not walk hand in hand with the apostles? Because some of them got jealous of him; some of them had no use for him; some did not trust him; and so it came to pass that even those people in the church of God many a time did not live as Paul wanted them to live, and moved him to tears; and therefore he wrote in this beautiful letter to the Philippians these words: “Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)” He was not speaking here of the enemies of Christ, the world, the followers of the devil; he was speaking here of professed Christians who pretend to be followers of Christ, and instead of being friends, they are enemies of the cross. Why? Because they do not walk in the footprints of Jesus who died on that cross.

Oh, how it hurt Paul to be unpopular among a people who called themselves Christians! And what was their trouble? Instead of going on the narrow way that leads to heaven, they were going on the broad way that leads to destruction. Instead of having their bodies and their souls saved, they were children of the devil, and the church hypocrites pretended to be followers of Christ when they were not. He says, “whose end is destruction.” What more can befall any child of the devil than to go to destruction? And yet Paul saw some men in the church of God, walking around in the world, pretending to be followers of the great Master when they were not, and they moved him to tears. He saw some there who thought a great deal more of their own physical wants than they did of their spiritual wants. There were people in those days who cared far less for the Lord’s Supper than they did for a good lunch; whose only question was, Where can we go next and have a real good time? When the Word of God was being preached you could not see them, but if there would be a picnic, a lunch, plenty to eat and drink, they would be there; they never failed; and these people had very little use for Paul; and Paul had very little use for their Christianity; and when Paul was sitting in that prison and he thought of those people, he said to himself: I know why you make a god of your stomach; because it has no ears to hear; it has no eyes to see; and you are only thinking of how you are going to satisfy your own personal wants, like any other heathen; you are not a child of God.

How often it happens in these days that we have people who are always at supper; they never fail; but are they at the Lord’s Supper? They never fail to be working in the kitchen, but will you find them with a hymnbook and a prayer in God’s house? And isn’t it very unpopular for a man of God when he stops to think of those people; and isn’t it a very unfortunate thing that people should call themselves Christians and always be found where there is soup, but never to be found where there is any meat; always to be found where there is a good, merry time, but never to be found where they can worship with God’s people and approach the throne on high? These things moved Paul to tears and made him very unpopular even in his day.

“Whose glory is their shame.” Some people seem to be ashamed of Christ; ashamed to pray; ashamed to worship; ashamed to go to Sunday School; ashamed to study God’s Holy Word; ashamed to have sacred pictures in the home; but they are not ashamed to live a life of sin and a life of lust; ashamed to be found with God’s people, but not ashamed to be

found with the world; giving glory to their shame, but never giving glory to God. And do you suppose a man of God could ever be popular among such people? How could he?

“Who mind earthly things.” The minds of some people are like the minds of some animals. There is an animal walking around in the world on four feet instead of two, with big flap ears covering his eyes, looking on the ground, but that animal seldom looks up; and there are some people who never seem to look up at all; their whole object in life is to look down into the dirt and find more acorns, instead of looking up through the starry windows of heaven for that heavenly home on high; they are asking, Where can I get another quarter; Where can I get another dollar? Where can I get another farm? Where can I get more ground? Where can I get more dirt? Where can I become more earthly? “Who mind earthly things,” never thinking of anything except just this world and a place to live instead of the heavenly home, when the fact is that we are only pilgrims here. And so Paul became very unpopular among some of the people who called themselves Christians. It so hurt him to think that they would not walk in the footprints of Jesus Christ, that while he was writing this letter, the tears were falling down on the parchment of that very message which was to become the message of God to a perishing world.

II. Yes

Was Paul popular? I not only said No, but I now answer, Yes. He was popular in Christ’s pure church; he was popular among the heavenly saints; he was popular among the holy angels; and he was popular with the true and living God.

He Was Popular In The True Church Of God

The church of God, as you are well aware, is a divided church – a church militant, and a church triumphant. The church on earth is called a militant church, because it is a fighting church, fighting for the truth, not with swords of steel, but with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Among that class of people Paul was popular. There never was a more popular pastor in any congregation than Paul was in the little church at

Philippi. Oh, how they loved their little pastor! And when he went forth as a missionary from one town to another, they followed him, and when he was down in the dark prison at Rome, they sent their messengers to comfort him, to bring him collections, to help him along in his great battle; and Paul was so touched with their love and their liberality that he wrote them a letter, which became an inspired letter of God, to show the world how people should love a faithful man of God. He was popular among true Christians.

Not only was he popular among true Christians everywhere, but he was popular also among those who have gone before, who have died in Christ Jesus. When Taylor wrote those beautiful words –

"I am but a stranger here,
Heaven is my home;
Earth is a desert drear
Heaven is my home.
Danger and sorrow stand
Round me on every hand,
Heaven is my Father-land,
Heaven is my home.

What though the tempests rage,
Heaven is my home;
Short is my pilgrimage,
Heaven is my home.
And time's wild wintry blast,
Soon shall be overpast,
I shall reach home at last.
Heaven is my home.

Therefore I murmur not;
Heaven is my home;
Whate'er my earthly lot,
Heaven is my home.
And I shall surely stand
There at my Lord's right hand.
Heaven is my Father-land;
Heaven is my home. –

I say when he wrote these words he must have had the spirit of an apostle Paul who sat down in the prison at Rome and wrote these memorable words:

“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

He Was Popular With The Saints On High

Paul was popular not only among the true Christians on earth, in the church militant, but he must have been very popular among the saints on high. It seems to me if the little child shall behold the Father's face in heaven and see the joy which is to be found when a man on earth repents, surely our dear ones must be able to look down and see what is going on here in this world; and if they can see and know what is going on here, how popular Paul must have been that day when he was starting out to make known the Savior to a great world. Oh, how popular he must have been in the estimation of Abraham, to whom the promise of Christ was made. How popular he must have been in the estimation of Jacob, and of Isaac, and of the prophets of old. How popular he must have been in the eyes of John the Baptist, who had gone before, and had told the rest, Paul is coming; I am here now, and down there he is fighting the very battles that I began.

He Was Popular With The Angels

He was not only popular among all the saints, but he must have been popular in that day among the holy angels, for you will remember that the apostle Paul when he went to Philippi was put into prison, his feet fastened in the stocks, and there the angel of God went and shook that prison and loosed him, with all the other prisoners, and informed him by Providence of the great fact that the angels of God were on his side. He must have been popular among those angels that sang when the Savior was born. He must have been popular with that angel that rolled the stone away from the Savior's grave. He must have been popular with that angel that stood by on Mount Olivet when Christ ascended on high, and told the apostles that as they saw the Savior go, He will come again. Those angels were watching Paul and were pleased with his work and went with him into prison or wherever he went. Oh, yes, Paul was popular.

He Was Popular With God

Not only was he popular among the holy angels, but he was a popular man with his God in heaven. That same God who loved Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, loved Paul, followed him wherever he went, because he was honest, and because he was so honest, converted him to the truth, and led him out into the world as one of the greatest missionaries the world has ever known. If there ever was a man in the world who was blessed by God from on high, it was Paul. Oh, God loved that little man, loved his work, prospered him wherever he went. I know at times people seem to think Paul's life was a failure. Sometimes when we read the life of this apostle we wonder whether his life was not a failure. Why should this little man be confined in that prison for two long years? Why should his life be cut short just at the time when he might have done so much good in the world; when he might have been allowed to go over the world himself and be seen of people as the mighty missionary of God? But God's ways are not our ways; they are as much above our ways as the heavens are above the earth. And heaven is not simply a few miles away; it is millions and millions of miles above us; and as those stars that we will look at tonight as we step out of this church, are millions of miles away, far beyond those stars is heaven, and away above those stars is the mind of God, and as far as it is above us, it is above our minds. And so let us not forget that God knew what he was doing. Paul was a greater man in the prison than he could have been outside. Had there not been some Providence that placed Paul behind those walls, we would not have these epistles written and saturated with his tears, written with chains clanking upon his arms; we would not have had this great Book today being published in over three hundred languages and read all over the world. How could Paul have done outside of the prison what he did in the prison? How could the living Paul, with his head on, have preached as Paul with his head off did? How could he have preached with pen dipped in ink, as he did with pen dipped in his own blood? And so God knew what he was doing, and Paul was popular; and I believe that when he died a martyr, died and came home to heaven, that not only the saints on high, not only the holy angels, but God Himself said: Welcome, thou popular man, Paul; I am glad that thou art here.

Dear friends, in conclusion, *let us learn tonight this great lesson, to be popular on the Judgment Day.* That is the only kind of popularity that is worth anything. We find that the apostle Paul referred to that when he said: "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His

glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.” Paul’s body was not beautiful; it could not have been beautiful, after being whipped, and scourged, and stoned as he had been; after being penned down in these dark dungeons for years; I am sure any one would have said, There is a very homely little man; there is a body full of cuts and stripes; there is a man that has been wounded every inch of his body; Oh, how mutilated he seemed to be; but the apostle Peter did not forget one thing, that that little body of his would go down into the dust, returning to the dust from whence it came; that the same Savior that ascended up on high in the presence of the apostles, higher and higher, and went home to the Father, had said: “Let not your hearts be troubled; ye 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. 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 so Paul said, I am going to so live and so walk, and so ask you to follow with me that when at last our work on earth is done, and this vile body has been raised when Christ shall come again, that it may be a glorified body, and that on that day I may be popular with my God; and so he wrote these words of my text: “Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.”

There are two classes of people in this world; some are watched, and some are not. Some are going on the narrow way that leads to heaven, and others are not. How can a child of God go on two ways at the same time? How can a child of God go with these stomach worshipers, how can he go with people that are going to destruction, and at the same time go on the narrow way that leads to heaven? No, says Paul, I will tell you how we have got to go. Here I am in the prison at Rome; over here are the great Alps; they are in sight, and when the travelers go over those great mountains, the guide takes a rope and ties it around his body, and then around the next, and the next, and the next, and so on, and when the guide goes ahead he says. Follow me; and the man behind him says. Follow me; and thus the man away at the rear, though he doesn’t see the guide, follows him because he follows those that walk in his footsteps. So, says Paul, Christ is our great Leader; I follow Him; and I ask you Philippians to follow me, and together we will follow Him, and we will come home to Him, and we will be popular on that last great day. This is the only popularity worth having. May

we all so live that when our last hour shall come, we may fall asleep in Jesus; and when we waken on the resurrection morning, we may be popular with the holy angels, popular with God, popular with the saints above; perfectly popular in heaven forever. This is my prayer. Amen.

59. God Has Translated Us.

Twenty-Fourth Sunday After Trinity.

For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son; in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Col. 1:9-14.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Dear Friends:

WE ARE TAKEN BACK THIS EVENING into history at least nearly three thousand years, to a scene that never could have been forgotten by those who saw it. In some way God revealed to Elijah that his days on earth were now done. He started from the village of Gilgal down to Bethel. His dearest friend on earth, Elisha, was bound to go along; Elijah urged him to tarry, but he would not; I must stay with thee as long as I can. Then Elijah left Bethel and started down to Jericho, and told his friend to tarry; but Elisha said, No, I cannot tarry; I will go down to Jericho. Wherever they came the sons of the prophets seemed to know that Elijah's ascension day had come, and they said, Elisha, do you know your friend is going to leave you today? His answer was, I know it, but hold your peace. At Jericho Elijah said, You must tarry here, Elisha, until I go down to the Jordan; but Elisha said, No, I am going right along; and when they came to the Jordan Elijah took his

mantle, struck the waters, and they divided, and on dry land they walked across on the other side. Fifty of the young men, theological students, went down to see what would happen, and on the other side they did not hear the sounds of the hoofs on the ethereal highway, but the chariot of lire was coming. Then Elijah said to Elisha, If you have any favor to ask, ask quickly. Then Elisha asked that friend of his that he might have a double portion of his spirit. Elijah said, If you see me when I ascend, that will be proof that your request is granted. And all at once the chariot of fire comes and goes upward and Elijah leaves his friend. Elisha has gone just as far as he can. He looks up into the clouds, he sees those fiery horses galloping toward heaven, and he cries out: "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!" But Elijah was translated to the home on high.

The Apostle Paul down in the prison at Rome has a vision. He sees a vision, not of man going from earth to heaven, but from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light. The Apostle Paul, tied in that great prison by chains, would not allow his work to cease. Wherever he had an opportunity to win souls for Christ, he did it; and so one day he preached the Gospel to a man by the name of Epaphras, and that man was converted to Christ. He came from the city of Colosse, in Asia Minor, and he did just what every true Christian will do, when he found the difference between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light, he went home and told his father, his mother and his neighbors how to be saved. How can a man be saved from darkness to light and keep his mouth closed? The result was that the Apostle Paul was preaching, in spite of the fact that he was in the prison, to the whole world. Whenever he converted a man to God, he sent him out to start a mission. This church at Colosse had faithful members in it, and Paul wrote this beautiful letter in order to show how he appreciated their good services to God, and to warn them of their mistakes. Now the Apostle Paul, I say, looked upon this transition from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light as just as much a transition as it was for Elijah to go from earth to heaven in the chariot of fire, and I invite your attention this evening to this thought:

God Has Translated Us

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son."

May the Holy Spirit this evening bring the chariot of fire into our souls and translate us from darkness to light, if we have not been translated before. Notice then:

- I. The kingdom in which we were.
- II. The kingdom in which we are.
- III. The wonderful translation.

I. The Kingdom In Which We Were

What is that kingdom in which we were?

“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness.”

It is not hard to understand what that kingdom is. It is a kingdom of darkness; it is a kingdom universal; and it is a kingdom powerful.

When our first parents sinned there was a spiritual darkness in the world that was equal to death. If you were to step out of here today and find a man lying under the bright and shining sun, dead, you would not for a moment say that he is now beholding the light. A dead man cannot see the light. And yet we were told before the human race sinned that the moment man sinned he should die. When Adam and Eve committed that sin in the garden of Eden, though they lived bodily, they were spiritually dead; and then there came into this world not only the king of hell but the kingdom of hell. Oh, what darkness in the hearts of Adam and Eve when they went and hid themselves! What darkness of the human race when the image of God was lost! And from that day to this, my dear friends, there has been this kingdom of darkness. Why all these crimes in this world? Why all this murder? Why all this fornication? Why all this adultery? Why all this theft and robbery? Why all this coveting? Why all this malice and hatred? Why all this fighting against things that are good and holy? There is no question about the why. There is a kingdom of darkness, and that kingdom is universal.

From the days of Adam and Eve until the present day there never has been a child of God who was not at one time in the kingdom of darkness; and if this great truth were known by every Protestant church, you would

not find people fighting infant baptism; you would not find people saying that little children are born into the kingdom of heaven when it isn't true. When Jesus said to Nicodemus, a man must be born again, for that which is born of flesh is flesh, He there taught what the Scripture teaches everywhere, and what every man ought to know, that unclean parents cannot bring a sinless child into the world. Every child, therefore, born into this world in a natural state, is in a state of darkness, and only the grace of God can save any man. This state is universal. Only Christ has been born without sin. Two people were created without sin, but none but Christ was ever born sinless; therefore, before any one in all this world can ever come into heaven, he must come out of a kingdom of darkness universal.

Then let us not imagine that it is an easy matter to come out of one kingdom into the other. There are young men today all over Europe that have been watching their opportunity for years to escape their government. If it were an easy thing to leave a kingdom, there would be a million souls at the harbor of New York next week, but all over the kingdoms of foreign lands young men are watched, lest they escape the kingdom. And just so it is with regard to the kingdom of darkness. It is a powerful kingdom. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness." If you want to understand the real power of darkness and of the king of this realm, you must look at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Remember that Satan is a powerful king, and remember that he is not going to let any one leave his kingdom without a battle. And when Jesus Christ, the Son of God Almighty, came to earth and assumed human flesh, became a child in the crib of Bethlehem, Satan said to Herod, Write an edict that every child two years old and under shall be killed. It was the determination of Satan that day to kill Christ. When he tempted the Lord Jesus and told Him on the pinnacle of the temple to cast Himself down, it was Satan's object to have Christ commit suicide. When the Lord Jesus Christ began His ministry and publicly announced the great fact that He was now taking the great sin of the world on Himself, Satan said. If you become the representative of sin, then, sir, you have got to die. And I want to make a statement here that you might question, if you did not understand the power of the king of darkness, namely, that God Almighty Himself, the moment that He took the sin of the world on Himself, was compelled to die. Why? Because the kingdom of darkness is so powerful that no sin can escape it. When, therefore, Jesus is being whipped and scourged, it is Satan that is doing it. When Jesus Christ is having His hands,

and His feet, and His breast pierced, it is the king of darkness that is doing the piercing. And when Jesus Christ was hanging on the cross for six long hours, and at last cried out, My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me? He was then virtually suffering the agonies of hell and could not escape, and God the Father could not be present, because He had volunteered to become the sinners' substitute, and having become the sinners' substitute, Satan said, You have got to take what the sinner would take, and that is death. Death is the wages of sin and Christ could not escape it. When you behold the Lord God almighty dying on Calvary, and dead, and lying in the grave, there you see the power of the kingdom of darkness. Satan said. You have got to die. You are dead, and the victory is mine.

That is the kingdom in which you and I were. How would you expect any infant to escape if there were no Savior? How would you expect any man on earth to escape the kingdom of hell, if there were not some power from on high to help him?

II. The Kingdom In Which We Are

Then let us notice that we are now in the kingdom of light.

“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son; in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”

The kingdom in which we are is, in the first place, a kingdom of light. Death is darkness; redemption is light. Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, and when Jesus Christ redeemed us on Calvary's hill. He brought sunshine to the souls of those that are in the kingdom of darkness; He showed them a kingdom in which there is no need for sun, moon and stars; a kingdom in which God Himself is the Light of the world – the inheritance of the saints in light – teaching us very plainly that salvation is a free gift, and not anything that we merit. The moment, therefore, that a man is born again, he has sunshine in his soul, and Oh, what a light that is! Imagine a man blind, and all at once God gives him light and he sees the world for the first time; what a wonderful impression that would make on the man's soul. And just so a man living in the kingdom of darkness, under the dominion of

sin and of Satan, in a state of damnation, when he hears the Gospel and sees the light of salvation, sees a sunrise in his soul that shows him the light of the new kingdom.

This is not only a kingdom of light, but a kingdom of love. In the margin of the Bible we find not only these words, “the kingdom of His dear Son,” but a better translation, “in the kingdom of the Son of His love.” God is love, and God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, shall not perish but have everlasting life. When Jesus Christ died on Calvary, it was love that was dying; it was God’s love that could not help but pour itself out for us, that we might know what it means to be loved by a loving God. Love would make sacrifices, and for that reason the Lamb of God could not do otherwise. He so loved us that He could not simply say, I love you, but He said, Here is My life; here is My suffering; here is My agony in hell; here is My death, that you may know that the kingdom into which I wish to translate you is a kingdom of love. Love, my friends, is going to conquer the world. Love is the greatest power that we can find. Yesterday as I was walking along the street I saw a little girl broken-hearted. Oh, she cried as if her very heart were breaking. I did not know whose little girl it was, but I said, “What is the matter, my little darling?” “Well, I bought this beautiful plate and fell down and broke it, and they will not take it back.’I knew what was coming. She had a father and mother at home who would have whipped her severely if she had come with that broken plate. And so a friend stepped up to her and said,”Just take your broken plate and throw it in the alley; here are fifteen cents, go and get another one.” The little child said, “Don’t do that.”

“Just go and get another one and say nothing about it.” She wiped her tears away and started off, as happy a little girl as ever walked on the streets. What was it that made her happy? The fact that some one had enough love for her to take her out of her trouble. There is no power on earth like love. This thing of saying. Don’t worry, if you have nothing to eat, nothing to wear, does not amount to anything. The thing to do is to keep your mouth closed and hand the man a suit of clothing; do not say very much, but give him something to eat. Yes, love is the greatest power in the world, and God is love. And now if you want to get into the kingdom of love you have got to be a Christian; you have got to come out on God’s side, and get out of the kingdom of darkness, for remember, that although Satan says. Come on, eat, drink and be merry come on and have a good

time, come on and obey the voice of lust and sow your wild oats and do not live this narrow life of the Christian it is the love of the butcher that takes the fat ox to the stall to kill him. Remember when Satan offers you anything that might seem like good, it is that he might bring you down to death. There is no love in the kingdom of darkness, and all love is to be found in the kingdom of light.

This is not only a kingdom of love and of light, but it is a kingdom of life. "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Well has Dr. Luther said of man, in his explanation in the catechism, that where there is forgiveness of sins there is life and salvation. Whenever, therefore, you have the promise that by doing so and so you have forgiveness of sins, remember that you are in the kingdom of life, and the kingdom of life wants you to live. And when Satan, that powerful being, demanded that our Substitute, who took our sins upon Him, should suffer death, he succeeded, but there was one thing Satan did not understand that that very death of Christ was our redemption; he did not understand that he himself was doing what he never wanted to do, namely, saving the world by crucifying Christ. Did you ever stop to think that God almighty made that fallen angel, Satan, help save you and me? Did it ever occur to you that the King of kings and Lord of lords, took the powerful king of darkness and said. You have got to stab Me in the breast, you have got to drive the nails into My hands and into My feet; you have got to lay Me down in the grave, in order that I can rise from the dead and conquer you forever, and give victory to the children of God? Oh, my dear friends, we have got a powerful king in our Savior Jesus Christ, who conquered death and the grave on Easter morning; and the song of the great kingdom of light says to the world: Believe in Christ; forsake your sins and walk in His path and you shall have life everlasting, the forgiveness of sins.

III. The Wonderful Translation

And so, my dear friends, you see the difference between the kingdom of darkness in which we were, and the kingdom of light in which we are, and now let us notice the wonderful translation.

Elijah was one hour down in the Holy Land, along the Jordan; the next moment he was going up by the fiery chariot and horses of fire into heaven;

another moment he is up home. He has been translated. Thus you and I have had a wonderful translation from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, and if there is one in this house this morning who is still under the dominion of sin, under the dominion of Satan, who is living in the darkness of damnation, Oh, may the chariot of fire come down from on high this day and translate you into the kingdom of His eternal light. When God translated Elijah He came in a chariot. Did you ever stop to think that God is coming to you and to me in the chariot of the means of grace every day? Paul recognized that fact when he said: "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." Notice what stirred the apostle to prayer is knowing the Word of God and knowing God himself. How does a man know the will of God? He knows the will of God by reading His will. If I would want to know your will, I would say, Hand over your will and I will read it. Every day when you are talking about the Bible you speak of the Old Testament, but testament is will; the New Testament is the new will of God, and the Old Will and the New Will make up the knowledge of God, and in this Word we find out His will. How does God translate a man out of darkness into light? He comes in the chariot of His Word. He comes through the means of grace. "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" When, therefore, you hear God's Word, I would have you to understand that it is just as wonderful as when God came in a chariot of fire and said, Elijah, now heavenward! That is the call of God this morning through His Bible.

Why do you suppose we have these services every Sunday morning and every Sunday evening? Simply as a place to go? No. God wants men rescued from death unto eternal life; God wants men translated, and He comes through His Word and through His Holy Sacraments and says: I am here to lift you up. And that is why we want our little children baptized; and that is why we want old sinners who have not been baptized, given to their God in the covenant. A man cannot belong to two kingdoms at the same time. When a man comes here to the polls to vote, he cannot vote as a subject of Germany and also as a subject of our country. Before you can vote in this country you have got to become a citizen of this country and renounce the government from which you came; and God demands nothing

less, and for that reason, when we come out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, God comes to us and says: Will you renounce the devil and all his works and ways? and the answer is, Yes, I renounce; and you cannot be baptized until you say that; you have no right to be baptized before you say that; a man cannot be a citizen of the kingdom of hell and a citizen of the kingdom of light at the same time; so God comes through His Word in Holy Baptism and says, This is not only water, but it is my chariot, the Word of God, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; will you renounce the devil? Will you renounce his works; will you renounce his ways? Yes, I renounce. Then come up higher. A translation wonderful, through the means of grace.

He comes to you in the Lord's Supper, and it is the same old chariot, God's Holy Word. "Take, eat, this is My body; take, drink, this is My blood given and shed for you for the remission of sins." For the remission of your sins in the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. Come and eat with Me and I with you, and I will give Myself to you for your forgiveness; come into the chariot, I will take you higher. That is the chariot with which God comes to us to translate us – the means of grace.

And what about those fiery horses? Well, my friends, God comes to us also with His fiery horses. Remember on the day of Pentecost, when that great multitude accepted the fiery truth that Jesus is the Messiah, then came the Holy Spirit like fiery tongues and sat upon the disciples, and they spake with different tongues, and they all confessed Christ and came into the kingdom of life. Remember, my friends, that the Holy Spirit is still in our midst.

"Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

You never can find the horses hitched away from the chariot, but they are hitched together; and just so the Holy Spirit is ever connected with His Word. You cannot hear one sermon; you cannot take one promise of God, without having the horses of fire, the Holy Spirit, pleading with you that you might come into the realm of light; and if you and I today are children of God, it is because this great chariot has been drawn by the fiery steeds of the Holy Spirit. It is He that calls; it is He that gathers; it is He that enlightens; it is He that sanctifies and keeps us.

And what about the mantle that fell from the shoulders of Elijah and was picked up by Elisha? Elisha, you will remember, picked up the mantle and walked back to the river Jordan and said, Now God of Elijah, give me his spirit! and he struck the waters, and they divided, and he walked home again to establish the mighty church of God more fully in that land. Elijah did not take his mantle with him because he was going up now for a higher service. “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” The apostle Paul here recognized the fact that when a man comes out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, that he does not come into a kingdom of laziness; he must come into a kingdom that means service – “every good work;” not a kingdom of simply being a little child and never growing – “increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might according to His glorious power.” When, therefore, we come out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, it becomes our duty to throw the mantle of the old kingdom away, and come into the new kingdom with our mantles thrown off, as Elijah did, and go into the greater service. You remember when Jesus Christ was on the mountain of Transfiguration, not only was Moses there, but Elijah, the man that entered into heaven in the chariot of fire, without his mantle. He wanted to look into these things; he wanted to see the Redeemer; he wanted to see the work go on; and I do not doubt for a single moment but that all the saints in heaven today are interested in the work that has been done here on earth for the extension of Christ’s kingdom. Do you suppose that your glorious mother on high does not care whether father is still living in the realm of darkness? Do you suppose that your own little babe in heaven does not care today if you are living on earth a child of the devil? Do you suppose that all the saints on high that have seen the glories of the kingdom of light are satisfied that we as a Christian church sit down and never do anything for the extension of God’s kingdom? The cry from heaven comes back through the Word of God, which is the chariot of fire, and says: Work! Throw off your mantle! Work, and be strengthened with the power of His might, and serve your God!

Oh, my dear friends, God says. Go – work – today – in My vineyard. Are we working as we ought? Are we showing by our own lives that we are in the kingdom of light? If I had been deathly sick with consumption and some physician had come to my bed and given me a medicine that cured me, I would make it my business to hunt up every consumptive and tell him of the doctor that helped me; I could not help it. If God has translated us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light with the fiery chariot of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace, and now we are in this kingdom, how can we rest and let all our citizens and neighbors in all the other parts of the world live on in darkness, and do nothing? I am more and more convinced in the last months of my ministry that unless a man is a missionary from one side of the globe to the other, that unless he is interested in the salvation of every man on earth, he lacks the light that he ought to have as a true child of God. And do not forget that these things are growths. Paul says that we shall grow in the knowledge. I do not say that a man cannot be a Christian and not be a foreign missionary, but he cannot be a full grown Christian; he cannot be an intelligent Christian. Therefore, let our aim be to know more of God's Word, to know more of the history of the poor that are living in darkness, to know more of the glories of the Christian life, and to push forward, with every prayer and with every gift, and with every speech, until all who are around us will be won for the kingdom of life. May God bless this message this evening and translate you into that glorious kingdom of His service.

Prayer

O Father in heaven, Thou who dost come to us in the channels that have been prescribed in Thy Holy Will; Thou who hast sent Thine only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world, to conquer death and all hell, and the king of darkness, Thou who hast brought to us the kingdom of light, and who art willing to take us into Thy covenant and promise, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; O Father, receive our thanks this morning for this kingdom, and we pray Thee that Thou wilt pour into our hearts and souls a desire to serve Thee as if our very salvation depended upon what we do, and yet give us such an appreciation of Thy grace that we may know the great truth that we are saved, not by our works, but alone by Thy great

mercy. O Father, go with us through the coming week; go with us through life, and may we in the future serve Thee as we never did before; and may we grow day by day as we are approaching death, as we are approaching the Judgment, and the great kingdom eternal. Hear this our prayer: We ask it in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

60. President Theodore Roosevelt's Proclamation. *Thanksgiving Day.*

It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O most high. Psalm 92:1.

I KNOW OF NO MORE FITTING INTRODUCTION to the addresses you shall hear today than to read the Proclamation of the President of the United States:

Thanksgiving Proclamation.

By The President Of The United States Of America.

A Proclamation.

When, nearly three centuries ago, the first settlers came to the country which has now become this great republic, they fronted not only hardship and privation, but terrible risk to their lives. In those grim years the custom grew of setting apart one day in each year for a special service of thanksgiving to the Almighty for preserving the people through the changing seasons.

The custom has now become national and hallowed by immemorial usage. We live in easier and more plentiful times than our forefathers, the men who, with rugged strength, faced the rugged days; and yet the dangers to national life are quite as great now as at any previous time in our history.

It is eminently fitting that once a year our people should set apart a day for praise and thanksgiving to the Giver of Good, and, at the same time, that they express their thankfulness for the abundant mercies received, should manfully acknowledge their shortcomings and pledge themselves solemnly and in good faith to strive to overcome them.

During the last year we have been blessed with bountiful crops. Our business prosperity has been great. No other people has ever stood on as high a level of material well-being as ours now stands. We are not threatened by foes from without.

The foes from whom we should pray to be delivered are our own passions, appetites and follies.

Against these there is always need that we should war.

Therefore, I now set apart Thursday, the 30th day of this November, as a day of thanksgiving for the past and of prayer for the future, and on that day I ask that throughout the land the people gather in their homes and places of worship, and in rendering thanks unto the Most High for the manifold blessings of the last year, consecrate themselves to a life of cleanliness, honor and wisdom, so that this nation may do its allotted work on the earth in a manner worthy of those who founded it and of those who preserved it.

By Theodore Roosevelt.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington this second day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and five, and of the independence of the United States the one hundred and thirtieth.

[Theodore Roosevelt.]

[Seal]
By the President,

Elihu Root, *Secretary of State.*

Beloved in Christ:

The inter-church conference and federation held in Carnegie Hall, New York, the past month will be a grand success on the Judgment Day. God will show to the world the errors of many denominations. The great Church of the Reformation can never confederate with error of any kind; but the time has come that the great, grand, Lutheran Church of the United States should dethrone the popery that is found among a few of its Synodical leaders. The time has come that the great Lutheran bodies, not only of this country but of the world, with its one grand declaration of independence, the Augsburg Confession, should stand as a body and make itself felt all over the world. For three long years the ministers of the Lutheran Church of this city have been praying and laboring for what we are pleased to see this morning, four congregations and one mission having their representatives together in one body, to obey the will of the great President of the United States, and the greater will of God, to come here to render thanks to Him.

Thanks Be To God.

- I. For this day's selection
- II. For His governing hand
- III. For the blessings of the land
- IV. For future protection

The theme is God's Word. The divisions are the substance of the President's Proclamation. The ministers of God are here to give you short addresses, and may the Holy Spirit bless them.

Dr. Markley, the pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church will now show you why we should thank God

I. For This Day's Selection

With thanksgiving the foundations of the earth were laid, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy; with thanksgiving this earth shall pass away and the new heaven and the new earth shall be introduced, when all the redeemed saints of God in glory shall sing Hallelujah! Honor, and glory, and power, and majesty, belong unto our Lord! Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth! Between that first-day of thanksgiving and that last day of thanksgiving, there have been

many times and many days of thanksgiving. When Melchizedek went out to meet victorious Abraham returning from the battle, and prepared him a feast, it was a thanksgiving day unto God for deliverance and for victory. When God gave the Jews His holy law, there was one day at least of the three great feasts set apart as a special day of thanksgiving unto the Lord. When we come down to the Christian Church, the Lord's Supper in one of its meanings and intents, as it was also called in the earliest church, is a feast of thanksgiving, or eucharist. The Christian Church always and everywhere has felt that it is appropriately proper that at the ingathering of the harvest there should be a day, a festival, of thanksgiving. Let us turn, however, especially to America, and see how we have come to this day in which we gather to thank our God.

The Pilgrim Fathers landed on the 21st day of November, 1620, in this country. The first winter was a hard one. The Indians received them kindly in the cold year, showed them how to plant their Indian corn, and, remarkably, they showed them how to plant alongside of each grain of Indian corn also a herring to fertilize the corn, that it might bring forth in abundance. The next fall, in 1621, we find that one of those men wrote home to an acquaintance saying: "We planted about twenty acres of Indian corn. Our Indian corn grew well, God be praised. Our barley it grew moderately well, but our beans were not worth the gathering. After the harvest had been gathered, Governor Bradford sent men with their fowling pieces out into the wilderness to bring back game for the celebration of a thanksgiving day." So richly did they return, says this letter, that for one week they kept a feast; they invited the Indians. the great Chief Massasoit, with ninety of his braves, came and spent a week with them. They celebrated it with games, with races, with drillings of arms and of their little band of twenty soldiers. It was a model and pattern of the modern thanksgiving day, with its games, as we find it most popular in the country today.

Next to that, however, let us be grateful and thankful for this fact. It is due to the Lutherans and to the Lutheran Church to introduce and to give to this Thanksgiving day its special intent and its religious meaning. The Lutherans – whether they were the Swedes that came under Gustavus Adolphus and landed on the shores of Delaware, and straightway raised up their church to return thanks to God; or the Salzburgers, who landed down in Georgia, and called their church Ebenezer – Hitherto the Lord hath led

us; or the Germans from the Fatherland who came to Pennsylvania and who everywhere observed their days of harvest feasts and of ingatherings – everywhere the Lutherans of all nationalities introduced a thanksgiving day of worship and prayer.

And it is this spirit that has brought so many of us together here this day. This national thanksgiving proclamation was issued by Washington, in February of 1795. It sounds exceedingly natural, for this reason probably, because it has been taken as the style and pattern of all succeeding presidents' proclamations. Let me read you simply a few selections from it:

“When we review the calamities which afflict so many nations, the present condition of the United States affords much matter of consolation and satisfaction... The unexampled prosperity of all classes of our citizens are circumstances which peculiarly mark our situation with indications of the Divine beneficence toward us... Deeply penetrated with these sentiments, I, George Washington, President of these United States, do recommend to all religious societies and denominations, and to all persons whomsoever in these United States, to set apart and observe February 19th as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, and on that day to meet together and render sincere and hearty thanks to the great Ruler of nations for the manifest and signal mercies which have distinguished our lot.”

And then he added to it the usual signature which we find added to the proclamations of the day.

However, Thanksgiving Day was not a regular institution until 1863, when President Lincoln, after the great battle of Gettysburg which preserved the Union of these United States, issued a proclamation just about the anniversary of his mother's death, that was so often in his heart, and called the United States to thank God for what God had done for the Union army and for the preservation of this country. From that day on. Thanksgiving Day has been a national institution and a custom, and it is one of the days that we would not like to lose out of our lives, that we would not like to lose out of our customs, or out of the annual holidays which come to our people and to our country. But who would have thought when Lincoln, a little over forty years ago, issued this proclamation, that today, or that in so brief a time, the presidential thanksgiving proclamation would sound around the whole earth?

We give thanks not only for a preserved and united country, but thanks for a growing and outspread country. In the South Seas, Puerto Rico, in the heart of the Pacific Ocean the Hawaii Islands, and at the gate of the Orient, the Philippines, today has been read the same proclamation that sounds in

your ears. A nation's thanksgiving, great and glorious, is the thought. Almost one hundred million people are today reminded by their chief magistrate that to the Supreme Ruler, to the God above us all, we owe thanks and tribute of praise for what He has done for us in things temporal; and much more ought we to render, in things spiritual, a national thanksgiving for the United States of America.

These United States by right belong to God and are God's. When Columbus landed on those southern islands, as he sat foot from the Santa Maria on the sands of the shore, he planted a cross; when the next ship came and landed, another cross was planted by its side; and after the Pinta had come, the Nina came, and a third cross was raised on the other side of the one Columbus placed there. The three crosses of Calvary consecrated the first landing of the white man upon American soil. It belongs to Christ, redeemed by His blood. When the Pilgrim Fathers landed they fell upon their knees in prayer and thanksgiving to God. When the Lutherans came, the Swedes brought the Gospel and the catechism and gave it to the Indians in their own tongue. When the Salzburgers came, they came that they might find liberty of conscience. When the Germans of Saxony came to the west, they came to escape the persecutions of the home land. And so we may well say that America, by every consecration, belongs to God. We owe Him thanks.

What will we do with it? That is the important question. When God gave richly to the rich fool he said, I will eat, drink, and be merry, for I have much goods laid up for many days. He was a fool. A father gives to his little son a book, a dollar, and an apple. If he finds him reading the book he will make a minister of the Gospel of him; if he finds him playing with the dollar, he will make a banker or merchant of him; if he finds him eating the apple he will make him a farmer. The father comes into the room and finds him sitting on the book, eating the apple, with the dollar in his pocket. What did he make of him? What will you do with the things God has given you? How will you render your thanks to Him this day?

II. For His Governing Hand

God's hand in history is a wonderful study. His hand has done wonderful things in our land the past year. Dr. Baltzly, pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran

Church, will now show us why we should thank God

For His Governing Hand.

The second thought that comes from the proclamation of the President, I wish to state thus:

National Causes for Thanksgiving.

A question that has recently received a round of vigorous discussion is: Is the United States a Christian nation? The ablest champion of the affirmative is found in none other person than the renowned David J. Brewer, the Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Of such importance has he regarded this question, and so intensely interested has he been in the answer, that he has given himself to a defense of it, and written a book which he has styled "*The United States a Christian Nation.*" Although the government as a nation, as a legal organization, is independent of religion, he says,

"...there is nowhere a repudiation of Christianity as one of the institutions and benedictions of society. There is no charter or constitution in this country which is either infidel, agnostic, or anti-Christian. In the avowed separation of Church and State there is recognized one of the fundamental principles of Christian religion, namely, the independence of the individual to bear his distinct relation between himself and his Maker, regardless of human government."

He points out this fact, that our Christianity was a primary cause of the first settlement on our shores; that the organic instruments, charters, and constitutions of the colonies were filled with abundant recognitions of Christianity as the controlling factor in the life of the people; that in one of them at least it was in terms declared the established religion. You will no doubt be surprised to know that in the Constitution of South Carolina of 1778 it was declared that the Christian protestant religion should be demanded and is hereby constituted and declared to be the established religion of this State. And, further,

“that no agreement or union of men upon pretense of religion shall be entitled to become incorporated and regarded as a church of the established religion of State, without agreeing and subscribing to the book of Five Articles, the Third and Fourth of which are that the Christian religion is the true religion; that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are of Divine inspiration and are the rule of faith and practice. In several other colonies the furthering of Christianity was stated to be one of the purposes of the government; in many, faith in it was a condition of holding office; in some, authority was given to the legislature to make its support a public charge; in nearly all the constitutions there has been an express recognition of the sanctity of the Christian Sunday; the God of the Bible is appealed to again and again. Sunday laws have been enacted and enforced in most of the colonies and States. About one-third of the population are avowedly Christian and communicants of some Christian organization; there are sitting accommodations in the churches for nearly two-thirds; educational institutions are largely under the control of Christian denominations’ and even in those which, in obedience to the rule of separation between Church and State, are secular in their organization, the principles of Christianity are uniformly recognized. By these and other evidences I claim to have shown that the calling of this republic a Christian nation is not a mere pretense, but the recognition of a historical, legal, and social truth.”

And now comes the last, and to me the greatest evidence that this is, after all, a Christian country – the fact that we have a national Thanksgiving; the fact that the Chief Executive of our nation has placed the great seal of the greatest government on earth upon a declaration which calls the people of our nation to the recognition of God as the Divine Giver of all things. And, my dear friends, such a declaration as that would never have been inspired, except in the heart of a man who himself was a Christian, and would never have been issued to a people who themselves were not of Christian spirit. We, as Christians, have reason today to thank Almighty God from the depths of our souls that we are in a nation where the God of all the earth is thus recognized by the nation and its Executive. It is also more than a matter of simple gratification that we have in the highest Court of this country a man who has seen fit to express himself in defense of the Christian religion. It is, I say, a matter of gratification that we have a man in the court of last resort of such a character. And then it should be a matter of general thanksgiving that we have as our Chief Executive not merely a passive Christian, but a preacher and a practitioner of righteousness; a man who has risen above the small confines of party politics, who has become the president of the people of our country. It is refreshing to have such a man as Theodore Roosevelt at the head of our nation, and we should thank God that He has overridden the plans and prejudices of politicians, and

placed as the standard bearer of our country such a splendid type of manhood.

And then, too, we should be thankful this morning for the part that our government has had in the matter of peace, during the past year. One of the bloodiest wars of modern times was being fought away over yonder on the eastern side of this globe, and the time came when it seemed to be opportune to put an end to it; but the King of England was helpless; the Emperor of Germany dared not offer his services; the President of the French Republic must keep silence; there was not a potentate on the earth who could speak, save the President of the United States; and, throwing himself and his abilities into the breach, he made bitter enemies friends. My dear friends, it is a matter of general and national thanksgiving that God has used our country for such a valuable service to mankind.

Another matter for expression of gratitude to Almighty God is this: I believe it was in January, 1863, that that wonderful President of our country in those days, Abraham Lincoln, issued his Emancipation Proclamation, whereby he made every law-abiding citizen of this country, a free-born citizen. That was the second great declaration in the history of our country. It seems to me that we have a third great emancipation proclamation issued this year by the President of our country, and sanctioned by the people of our nation – the emancipation of the American voter! Far out in the west – in Utah – there has been that all-absorbing octopus, that fearful and dreaded calamity of Mormonism, and for the first time the voters of that state have risen up and have smitten that evil, and once already the Christian conception of right has prevailed. I am thankful, and we as a nation have reason to be thankful, that the time has come when the political party leader, it matters not what his machine or his authority may have been, is helpless before the people who have risen to that high standard of being men who think for themselves, and vote their conviction.

And then, the last occasion which I may mention, for thanksgiving, is, that in this great State of Ohio, we have shown to the world what right is, and its power. Whatever may have been the real facts in the issue – I am not to discuss that – but whatever these facts may have been, the issue was made between the righteous element of our State and the unrighteous, and thanks be unto God today, the Church of Jesus Christ, awakened to her opportunity and duty, stands the glorious victor. Praise be unto His excellent name, praise be unto the God of all, that we have in this State shown to the

world, that the Church of Jesus Christ will stand for right. What inspiring causes we have for national thanksgiving!

III. For The Blessings Of The Land

The President says in his proclamation: "During the past year we have been blessed with a bountiful crop; our business prospects have been great; no other people has ever stood on as high a level of material well being as ours now stands." Brother Kellar, pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, will now show us why we should thank God

For The Blessings Of The Land

"Thanks be to God for the blessings of the land," is evidenced in two particulars:

1. In natural resources.
2. In intellectual achievements.

When the conqueror journeys through the land his paths drop blood. But standing as we do in the full blaze of God's Providence, we sing "Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness and Thy paths drop fatness." Our national heroes are far too often those who have ridden to victory over the fallen bodies of victims, and the hearts and tears of loved ones. But by a sharp and tender contrast are the movements of Jehovah through the land, not in tracks of blood, but of fatness. The clouds are His chariots; He rides upon the heavens in the greatness of His strength; He moves in His excellency on the sky; and the wheel tracks of Jehovah are marked by the fatness which makes glad the earth. We have been too prone to sing: "The melancholy days have come, the saddest of the year." Beholding the year we say once more it is crowned with goodness. It is encircled with the smile of Jehovah. Do the frosts nip the leaves? It is after the warm sunshine has opened the bud into a blossom and mellowed the rich clusters into ripeness. Have we thought in these fall days that nature is dying? It is only the things of nature putting on their winter dress. Leaves exist for the sake of the fruit. When the clusters are gathered, why longer cumber the tree? This scorched

and trodden earth needs a rest and the seasons come to call a halt upon the cruel forces that impoverish the earth. When, therefore, we say that the plants wither, the leaves fall and the grass dies, we are only proclaiming God's coronation on fruitful harvests and a well ordered universe of food. And whose heart does not well in thankfulness for the changing seasons? Plant life, animal life, your life, demands it. If any change were to take place in the seasons the whole order of nature would be disturbed. The conditions for the production of plant life would be thrown into utter confusion; the functions of plants would be entirely deranged and the whole vegetable kingdom would be thrown into instant decay and rapid extinction. Plants and man are closely related. How has your life been sustained through the past years? By feeding upon the vegetable kingdom. And now look at the dependence of vegetation upon seasons of their present length. If the summer and autumn were much shorter the fruit would not have time to ripen. If they were much longer the trees would put forth a fresh suit of leaves and blossoms to be cut down by the frosts and freezes. If the year were twice or thrice its present length the tree would exhaust itself in the production of fruit, and the fruit itself would not be matured for the reason, among other things, that it needs the rest which winter gives. Even the strong hard trees of the forest need all the seasons of their present length. There is the spring time for the raising of the sap to develop the leaves and the growth of the wood; and there is the winter time when the sap goes down again and allows the wood thus formed to harden and withstand the storms and blasts. If the season were shorter the seed would not ripen; if it were much longer the seed germ would die before the Spring for planting. These wonderful provisions are striking and interesting, but so commonplace that this is not the place to consider them in detail except to say that these great facts with reference to a well ordered solar system are simply unintelligible except by admitting into our conception an intelligent Author, who is God, of the organic and inorganic universe. And these fall days simply remind us that the earth has made another revolution. The great clock of eternity has struck another hour. The leaves have withered and died. The earth has frozen into a hard surface. But these are no melancholy days. It is God's coronation of goodness. We learn from these fall days that this planet, 25,000 miles in circumference, bearing on its surface a population of 1,500 million of souls, with innumerable animals, countless birds, and millions of fish has continued its mad flight through space, but

held in perfect orbit by the unseen hand of a Father. When we lie down to sleep at night the earth has not needed our watchfulness. Engulfed in darkness, all unconscious of the fearful rate at which we are moving, the fields have been just as fruitful and the seasons have returned in their proper time. And now comes the coronation of it all. In fruitful harvests, with a mild and gentle change from the heated season to the cold, man gathers the fruit of his toil and thanks God for the blessings of the land.

Turn again to the progress of the world and thank God again for the blessings of the land.

“We are living, we are dwelling,
In a grand and awful time;
In an age on ages telling
– To be living is sublime.”

With what kind of sickle did your father reap wheat? It was the same kind that Abraham used and with which Ruth gleaned in the fruitful fields of Boaz. We need not go back to the year One in our thought to be thankful today. The last century alone produces evidence sufficient that we have outgrown the old methods and old tools. Progress in the last 100 years has written anew the maps of the world. When the last century began, the center of population was eighteen miles west of Baltimore, Md. Greater New York now contains four-fifths as many people as composed the whole republic 100 years ago. In 1830 Chicago was an unsurveyed swamp. The plow of 1800 was a “crotch-drag;” the western plow of today is run by steam and turns eight furrows at a time. In 1800 Congress had no library; today it has the best in the world. Seventy years ago there were no public libraries in the world; today there is scarcely a village or hamlet without one. A hundred years ago a man could not take a ride on a steam boat, he had never seen an electric light nor dreamed of an electric car; he could not cool himself at an electric fan, nor warm himself at a steam radiator. The last century began with 900,000 slaves; it closed without any.

President Jefferson presided over a country of 900,000 square miles; President [Theodore] Roosevelt presides over a country of more than four and a half million square miles. And when we consider that during the last hundred years this American continent has been changed from a wilderness to a paradise, that the rumbling stage coach has been displaced by the lightning express, that the ignorance that abounded has been swept from our

border by the enlightenment of the public school, that Christianity has rooted out the prevalent belief of witchcraft, that four hundred colleges and universities have been founded and maintained, that homes for the orphans and asylums for the unfortunate have been reared, that industries flourish without limit, and that all the bonds of unity between man and man have been encouraged, and that we are living in a new and more glorious age – when we remember these things we are made to thank God for His direction of human progress. And are these melancholy days? Hardly. Can you be a cynic when the streets swarm with children bearing books on their arms? Then go to China, or go to Africa. Live among the devotees of ancestral worship or the shiftlessly lazy lovers of ease. No greater cause for thanksgiving can be conceived of in a material way than in these agencies for the enlargement of mental faculties and the enlistment of intellectual forces in a practical way. For that nation that does not provide well for the education of the youth is a doomed nation. It was ignorance enthroned that made tyranny possible. It was the dominance of ignorance that has already characterized too large a part of the world's history as the "Dark Ages." Gone forever are the days of chained intellect. The schools swarm with American citizens in embryo. In the Providence of God the opportunities for learning are presented. The printing press hums with the growth of men's thought, the distribution of literature is made to every poor man's hut, the pulpit echoes forth the spiritual idea, become incarnate in a living witness, and on every platform stands the champion of human rights God-given; and with the opportunity for knowledge and thought come also the privileges of light and of life until under the influence of knowledge the human soul is unfolding its powers as the warm sunshine opens the hard shell of the seed's life.

Be thankful then for a land that is productive; a land with the hill and the valley, rivers and lakes, a land of sunshine and rain, heat and cold, summer and winter. Be thankful for the changing seasons and the promise that so long as "the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." Gen. 8:22. Be thankful for a land with free institutions, free thought and public speech. Be thankful that God has set to work the forces for man's betterment. It was He who opened the gateway of advancement to King and peasant alike. It was He who unfurled the flag of equality. It was He who wrote the Golden Rule upon every law and statute book. He caused the stars to set a guardian angel

above each sleeping babe. He founded the school and the college and cleared a path from its portal to every poor man's door. Be thankful then, all ye ends of the earth, and praise His name forever.

IV. For Future Protection

We have heard from Dr. Markley of St. Paul's, why we should thank God for this day's selection; we have heard from Dr. Baltzly of St. Luke's, why we should thank Him especially for His governing hand; and we have heard from the Rev. Kellar of St. Matthew's, why we should thank Him for the blessings of the land. These three different topics exhaust the proclamation of the President, with the exception of one thought. He says in this Proclamation:

“The dangers to national life are quite as great now as at any previous time in our history... We are not threatened with foes from without. The foes from whom we should pray to be delivered are our own passions, appetites and follies, and against these there is always need that we should war. Therefore I now set apart the 30th day of November as a day of thanksgiving for the past and prayer for the future.”

Let me show you in conclusion why we should thank God

For Future Protection.

1. What are our foes?
2. What are our forces?

1. What Are Our Foes?

Our great President has said there are three great foes in this country, internal foes, our passions, our appetites, our follies.

Now what are these passions? It is impossible in a few moments to tell you of all the passions and all the appetites and follies of this country, but it is only due to the truth that we should see all sides of this great question, and first of all I call attention to the great passion in this country for money; and one of the best illustrations we have of this passion is found in the great discussion in the east of the great insurance companies. I simply will state

this fact, that John A. McCall of the New York Life, has spent \$476,927.00 for legislative jobs; that he has spent to secure or prevent legislation, \$1,103,920.00 of the people's money. I call attention to the fact that in the Mutual Life, Mr. McCurdy, whose resignation was accepted yesterday, spent not less than \$150,000.00 for himself, and \$120,800.00 for one of his sons, and \$147,680.00 for a son-in-law; in two years' time has spent \$4,643,936.00 of widows' and orphans' money just to satisfy his own appetite and passion for money. I need not tell you that the great Senator from New York who has been listened to all over this country as one of the great men, is guilty of a crime in the Equitable which would place any poor man behind the bars. These men are such as President Roosevelt has in mind when he talks about the passions of this country that are our internal foes. These men are only some of the foes we have in our country. We have men all around us who will stoop to anything in order to spend their money so they do not have to go behind the bars. And that is a foe we have to contend with in the midst of all our blessings.

Then how about some of the other foes? Look at sinful liberty. Just because this is a land of liberty, some people have the idea that they can go and do as they please instead of obeying God's holy law. God says we shall love Him with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength, but we have people who think they can call any one God, and I still feel ashamed in this year A. D. 1905, that we cannot have the name of Christ in a proclamation of thanksgiving. I still feel ashamed of a government that simply calls upon some term that any heathen and any foe uses. Let us not forget to look at the dark side of our government. There are some people who think they can curse and swear, and damn, no difference what God said; there are some people who seem to think they can do on the Lord's day what they please, and we need not go far away from our doors to find them.

These are foes of passion, and we have foes of appetite as well. It seems to me that the editorial that appeared in one of our city papers last night expresses about what our country is thinking at large:

"Perhaps even more, however, will celebrate the day without any thought of thanks, but only intent upon enjoying material pleasures to the utmost and no preaching can lead some to any other recognition of this original 'holy day,' which from year to year takes on more of the character of an amusement or gala day, given over to feasting, athletic games, social gatherings and the pleasures of the ball, party, theater or other amusement."

I believe one of the very passions and appetites of our country today is amusement. This young man that was killed down here on the railroad track the other day, was killed for amusement; and the time has come that this nation ought to crush the hazing and the foolishness that is done by people who call themselves intelligent in our colleges, not even barring our Christian colleges, and the day ought to come soon in this country when our appetite to do anything mean and low and devilish, simply for fun, ought to be abolished. These are foes that are found among the appetites.

And how about the follies? How about the pride, and the false education, and the ruined homes? We dare not overlook these follies. President Roosevelt is too wise not to call attention to the fact that we have inward foes that are going to ruin this country unless we rise to the height he is trying to rise, and crush them. Just yesterday I heard of a young lady in this city who is earning six dollars a week who cannot come to church because she cannot get clothing good enough. This is only one of hundreds, in our own country. The time has come that the poorest girl thinks she must dress like the prince's daughter, and if not, she cannot go to God's house. Isn't that a pride, my friends, that the devil has planted into this nation? Isn't that a pride that is ruining hundreds and thousands of souls?

True it is that we have many colleges, for which we ought to thank God; true, we have our good public schools, for which we ought to thank God, but let us not forget to look at the darker side. Let us not forget, my friends, that we have in this country today graduates of colleges and high school students by the score that cannot help build a street car track or dig a sewer, or do the many things that ought to be done in this country. We talk against immigration, but you take the "dagoes" and the colored population out of this country today and what would we do? What are you going to do with the American boy? I tell you, my friends, we have foes right in our false system of education that need to be eliminated. The time has come when men ought not only be educated, but know how to work; when girls ought to know that to be a good housekeeper is worth more than all the diplomas from all the colleges; when all of us ought to know that it requires the sweating of the face to earn our bread; and I repeat it, if we did not have help from other nations today we could not make the progress we are making.

These are some of the follies, and I only mention one more, and that is our ruined homes. It does seem to me that all good things will center right

back in the church and in our Christian homes; and I do think that if any country on earth has ruined homes, it is the American country. How many fathers have we that are found in the family? How many mothers have we that are true to their children? How many homes have the family altars they ought to have? Oh, my friends, there are foes within. The President sees them and we all ought to see them.

2. What Are Our Forces?

What are our forces? For what can we thank God in spite of these internal foes?

We can thank Him this morning for more Lutheran doctrine. I have in mind that great speech which President Roosevelt made at the re-dedication of the Memorial Church in Washington. I just want to quote these few words:

“The Lutheran Church in this country is of very great power numerically and through the intelligence and thrift of its members, it will grow steadily to even greater power. It is destined to be one of the two or three greatest churches and most important national churches in the United States; one of the two or three churches most distinctly American, among the forces that are to tell for making this great country even greater in the future, therefore a peculiar load of responsibility rests upon the members of this church.”

I maintain that President Roosevelt has struck the right cord when he calls our attention as a Lutheran Church to our great responsibility. In other words, there are few people today who are recognizing what a force the Lutheran Church is, not only in itself, but throughout all denominations. I can remember well the day when other churches never prayed the Lord's Prayer; when they never confessed the Apostles' Creed; when they repudiated anything that consisted of a service responsive. Today there isn't a church on earth any more that does not want something that the Lutheran church has had these many years. A man said to me the other day, “One reason I object to this responsive service is just because it came from the Roman Catholics,” – too ignorant to know that the Catholics learned that from Dr. Luther. I want it understood that the Lutheran Church today is sending forth her religion and power throughout all the world, and this is one force that cannot be downed. I thank my God today for the effect that the Lutheran Church is having on all the churches in the world.

I thank my God today that we have more praying people than we ever had before. I do not mean to say that we have more people comparatively who say their prayers, but I do not believe there ever was a time from the days of Christ until now, when there were more people moved to go right into their closets and cry out to God for help for the nation and for the church than right now. I believe the Holy Spirit is working in the hearts of the people as He never has before. We begin to feel that there is a power in our midst that no man can resist. Even the former infidel and skeptic now apologizes for not being in the Christian Church.

Let us thank God today for more missionary obedience. It is a remarkable fact that one hundred years ago a world-wide missionary movement began. Stop and think what that means today! In the days of old there stood one man on Mount Carmel, a mighty man of God, – his power felt today. In the days of Christ one man stood down along the Jordan, who gave his head for Christ – John the Baptist – his power is felt today. In those days there was a mighty man, – little Paul – who made himself felt all over the world, and will be felt until the Judgment Day. In the days of the Reformation there was a Luther, who stood up for conscience, for liberty of speech, and pure doctrines, and his power is felt today. Never did Luther live as he has lived in this year 1905; but I want to say that there never was a time in all the world when there were so many Elijahs, when there were so many John the Baptists, so many Pauls, so many Lutherans, who in every State of this Union, and in every city, are beginning to stand up and tell the mighty truths that God has wanted told for centuries, and I bespeak for the coming year and years a power in our ministry such as we have never had before. The days are past when we are going to stand before the people and try to put them to sleep with philosophy; the time has passed when we can talk about everything except Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world, and the time will come, mark what I say, when His name goes into the proclamation of Thanksgiving, – and may that day come soon! Amen.

Prayer By Dr. Baltzly.

Thou art our God and we recognize Thy hand in the destinies of nations, in the care and preservation of this great country, which Thou in Thy pleasure hast called into being; we thank Thee for this day, and we ask that we may

understand and comprehend something of what it means not only to the nation but to the cause of Jesus Christ, We ask Thy blessing upon us as worshipers as we have come to Thee, and by our presence and our songs, our confessions and our works we have declared our unalterable unchanging allegiance to Thee, Thou eternal God of all the earth; and as we go from this place of worship, let Thy Spirit attend the words that have been given, that we may be encouraged, and that we may be on our guard against the foes without and within: in Jesus' name, who has taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

61. Our Dear Dead. Memorial Day. *Twenty-Fifth Sunday After Trinity.*

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thes. 4:13-18.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

WE ARE REMINDED not only, by nature but by the text selected by the Church, that death is coming. One glance at the trees, the leaves of which have fallen to the ground, one glance at the grass that has withered, will tell you that the winter is near and that death is coming. In our selection of texts for the Church year, as we approach the end we treat of death, of the resurrection, and of Judgment. We have been thinking very much concerning the dead in other families, but I would invite you this evening to go with me to yonder cemetery, and just spend an hour by the side of the graves of your own dear ones. As a nation on the 30th day of May we pay a tribute to our soldiers who laid down their lives on the battlefield for the liberty and protection of our country, but, my dear friends, some of the greatest battles have been fought in homes with the blinds drawn closely down, in rooms where they have not been seen by the world. There have

been battles fought in your own home among those that have passed beyond that are not described on the 30th day of May, and it is perfectly in order that we should, at least once in the year, pay special respect and honor to those of our own who lie in yonder little beds prepared by the Savior as a place of rest until He shall raise them up on that beautiful morning; and no difference how humble our homes; no difference where those little flowers are seen, it was a dear one that passed away; and, therefore, I invite your attention this evening to

Our Dear Dead

May God, the Holy Spirit, help us so to live and so to die that when that hour comes that we fall asleep, we may fall asleep in Jesus.

I. Not All Are Here

Concerning our dear dead, let me state that *not all are here*. We are apt to think that only a few people are dead. We think of the one billion, four hundred millions of people on this earth as if they were the greatest part of humanity; we forget that in every century three times as many people as are living on earth today, pass beyond. Where is the man who is able to compute how many people have fallen by the hand of death from the days of Adam and Eve until this very hour? Multitudes, multitudes are sleeping in their graves. In every family there are some missing, and when we trace this family back to our forefathers, we need not go far until we are compelled to say, they are all dead; not all are here.

II. Our Dead Are Dear

Then I would say, *Our dead are dear*. How dear they are to us, those that sleep under that little mound yonder. One has a dear father there, another a dear mother, another a dear brother, another a dear sister, another a dear wife, another a dear husband, another a dear little child. Sometimes when we read of the ungodly people who are ready to slaughter their children, we wonder how it can be. When I stop to think how dear that one is to me that only saw this world twenty-five hours, I wonder how any man can be

brutish enough, how any woman can be hard-hearted enough, to rejoice in the death of their offspring. How dear our dead are to us.

III. The Sleep So Near

Next I would say of our dear dead, *They sleep so near*. It is not far away that we find their little beds. There was a time when this world was a large world; there was a time when it took a long time to go to where some of our dead were; but in these days of swift communication and swift travel, it only takes a little while to go to yonder bed where mother sleeps, to go where father sleeps, and where brother and sister, and dear little children sleep, where our dear little son sleeps, and he sleeps! Oh, what a beautiful thought, he sleeps! Heathen philosophy never knew that, but we know it. He who conquered death said, Lazarus sleepeth. The maid is not dead, she sleepeth. When those men picked up their rocks and threw them at Stephen until he fell dead, I suppose they thought he is now out of the way, but the Word of God tells us he sleepeth. Stephen is sleeping; Lazarus is sleeping; and our dear dead are sleeping, not far away. When we put our children to sleep we never think it is a sad hour. With a kiss and with a prayer we say “Goodnight, little darling,” expecting in the morning to see them awake. But, my dear friends, when our children awake in the morning, they only awake to go to sleep again; they awake to die; but these dear dead of ours, when they wake up, they will awake never to sleep again.

IV. Hide Not Your Tear

Concerning our dear dead, I would say, *Hide not your tear*. “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.” Mark well, the Holy Spirit does not tell us not to sorrow, but not to sorrow as those who have no hope. Throughout the history of the world funerals have been dreadful days for the children of the world, and I cannot help but notice in my own ministry the wonderful difference between a funeral in a Christian home and a funeral that is held in some home where there is no hope. In all homes we find sadness, and why should we not? Hide not your tear. It is sad

in every home to part with our dear ones, and we never know how dear they are until that hour when they close their eyes in sleep. Therefore, it becomes necessary for us not to be too careful not to shed a tear. There is nothing in this stolid philosophy that simply says we cannot change things and what do we care; and stand at the grave as if we were stone and had no hearts of flesh. When we stand by the open graves of our dear ones we realize what sin has done; we know what it means to have those sacred cords torn apart; we know what it means to say, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust over the flesh and bone of our own bodies; but let us not, with all our tears, weep like those that have no hope. It is a terrible thing to stand by the grave of one who has not fallen asleep in Jesus. I am not surprised to find people weep and howl in the presence of their dead when they have lived like animals and died like animals and have no hope; but remember, that the apostle Paul does not admonish everybody not to weep. "Weep not like those that have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

But how about those who do not sleep in Jesus? To think that I should stand by the side of a father's casket, who did not love Jesus, to think that I should stand by the grave of a mother who was not baptized and never cared for the Bible nor for prayer, nor for things that are good and holy; to think that I should have to stand by the grave of a son who never gave his heart to God; to think that I should have to stand by the grave of a daughter who had died in her sins; to think that we must stand by the graves of our offspring, created in the image of God, and dying in all their sins and agonies, no wonder we should weep and howl and cry out, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me? But, my dear friends, hide not your tears, even though you know your dear ones fell asleep in Jesus; though you know they are better off than they would be here. It is perfectly allowable to let a tear steal down over your face; it is no easy matter not to see that dear one in her little chair; it is no easy matter not to see the mother's face any more; it is no easy matter to part in this world from those who have gone to yonder shore. Let us not be ashamed of a tear for our dear dead.

V. The Way Is Clear

Then, I would say concerning our dear dead, *The way is clear.*

“For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Mark well, these words which I have just read are not the opinions of an apostle Paul. He declares this Word he got from the Lord Jesus Christ. Now surely, the Lord Jesus Christ who died on Calvary, slept in the grave, and arose again on the third day, conquered death and remained on earth a period of forty days and forty nights and then ascended on high in the presence of the disciples, went on home to the Father, and afterwards cried from heaven. “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” and in the Book of Revelation called down to John from heaven, know the way. It was He who said, I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no man cometh to the Father but by Me. Jesus, who died and ascended on high, shows us that He is the way, and the way for our dear dead to go home.

I am not talking this evening about those that fell asleep without Christ; I am talking to you as a Christian people. The apostle Paul was writing this letter to the Thessalonians; they were a Christian people, but they were worried about their dead; they had the promise of a coming Savior, and they thought He would come soon, and He had not come; they were wondering, When will our Savior come? Oh, says the apostle Paul, I have got a message for you from the Lord, and it is a very clear message concerning the dead. I want you to understand that when death comes you fall asleep, and you remain in the grave until Christ shall come in the clouds. The same Savior that went up on high is coming again, and when He does come, do not for a moment think that these dead ones are going to see Him last. No, He says, you shall not prevent those that are dead. The word “prevent” originally meant, to go before; and so he says, you must not think you are going before. "For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (or go before) them which are asleep. In other words, when the Savior comes, and you and I are not dead, those that are dead will rise before we go to heaven, and we shall see them when they rise. Oh, what a comfort it is tonight to know that your dear dead will rise up and you shall see them; for we are told here that we shall be caught up together. Families shall go to

heaven together, those that fall asleep in Jesus; we shall know each other; we shall be together; and we will go on home to that home on high the same way that Jesus Christ ascended.

Not only is it a fact that we shall be there and go together, but we shall go there at the shout of the Lord our God. It is a remarkable thing what a power the Word of God has. When we turn to the first chapter of the Bible we find that God said, Let there be light, and there was light. God created the heavens and the earth with His Word, and I do not know that He said it very loud; He may have whispered. Let there be light, and there was light. The same God, who with a whisper of His Word, can make the sun and the moon and stars and the constellations of the heavens, when He shouts, the dead shall rise, your dead and my dead. People say. How shall the dead rise? The dead shall rise by the shout of the mighty Word of God that made the heavens and the earth with a word. The trump of God shall sound; the archangels shall sound their trumps, and God shall raise them up, and then we shall be gathered with them.

You will please to notice that there is not one word said here about those that fall asleep in their sins. We read in the Book of Revelation of a first resurrection and a second resurrection; we also read in the Word of God of a Judgment, but remember, it is not for us to tell just how long it will be between the first resurrection and the second; the Bible does tell us that there is a period of a thousand years called the millennium, and I have my own private opinion about when that millennium will be. Some people think it is coming before the first resurrection, but how will that harmonize with the teaching of God's Word that the world shall grow worse and worse until the end shall come? There is no millennium before the first resurrection, but I do believe that when God shall raise up those that fall asleep in Christ, and we who are here on earth changed in the twinkling of the eye, shall be lifted up together with them, that God will combine His judgment with the resurrection, and that a thousand years there shall be of reign before those who shall rise hereafter shall go into that awful death of ever dying and never being dead, called eternal death. Of one thing we can rest assured tonight, and that is that God will do things just right for our dead.

And now let us be in the clear! If we want to ascend to heaven on that last great day, we must die in Christ Jesus; and if we want to die in Christ Jesus, we have got to live in Him; if we are going to be sure we are living in

Him; we must be sure we are living in Him right now. How do you know you are going to fall asleep in Jesus if today you are a child of the devil? Consequently, we are admonished to comfort one another with these words. Yes, there is a comfort in these words. Isn't it a comfort to you, my dear hearer, tonight, to know that God has dealt with every individual separately in all the world before? Isn't it a comfort to you to know that your own dear dead were dear to Christ? Isn't it a comfort to you to know that those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will wake up never to sleep again? Isn't it a comfort to you to know that you have enough heart in you yet to shed a tear for your dear ones? And isn't it a comfort to you to know that the way is made so clear that a man must be a fool if he does not understand it? Now, my dear friends, take these words and comfort yourselves with them. God will raise up your dead and give them the crown of eternal life if they fell asleep in Jesus.

And yet I cannot close these few words this evening without a word of admonition to those that are living without Christ. How can I comfort your living ones when you are dead? Some of you are living as if there were no God in heaven; some of you are living as if the Bible were a lie; some of you are living as if you took a delight in opposing everything that God ever said. All our pleading and all our praying, and all our coaxing, seems to be in vain; you have given yourselves apparently into the hands of the devil, and you are living on from day to day, trying to persuade yourselves that after all it will be all right, no difference how you live nor how you die. If I were to offer you five dollars tomorrow morning you would be in my study in five minutes time, but when I offer you the plan of salvation to show you how to live and die and be eternally with your God and be saved, you do not care. My friends, I come to you tonight with what may be the last plea. Remember, God is not always going to ask you; He is not going to continue forever and ever to say. Come unto Me. I give you one more invitation tonight to come to our class on Friday evening and learn more fully the plan of salvation. Be ready every day to be the best citizen you can possibly be in this world, and when you fall asleep, to fall asleep in Christ, and then when you lie in your coffin some preacher does not need to stand there and play hypocrite; he does not need to stand there with almost a broken heart and try to comfort people when he cannot; he does not need to say, I hope you are in heaven, when he feels in his very heart you are in hell. I would ask you tonight to be honest with your own soul, and honest with your God,

and while you are thinking of your dear dead, remember that when you rise you want to be gathered with them, but as sure as there is a God in heaven, as sure as this Bible is His Word, if you do not fall asleep in Jesus, you cannot awake in His name and be His. May God help you tonight to decide to live for Christ, so that when you die and we speak of our dear dead, we may speak of you as having fallen asleep in Jesus. Then we can bring comfort to your dear family; then they will go home from the cemetery and feel that it was a good thing that our father, and our mother, our son, and our daughter, prepared to meet their God. Did you ever stop to think why we call that place out there God's Acre, or cemetery? The Germans call it the yard of peace – *Gottesacker*. Cemetery, means the place where they sleep. Oh, what a beautiful thought. God's acre, the garden of peace, where the angels of God are watching over our dear dead. Amen.

62. The Word and the World.

Twenty-Sixth Sunday After Trinity.

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless. 2 Pet. 3:3-14.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

THE APOSTLE PETER in this second and last letter, recognizes the fact that in a very few weeks he will stand before his God. It is the last letter that he is to write, and he wants to assure the world of three things before he dies: One is that Jesus Christ is the promised Savior; that false teachers with

damnable heresies, as he calls them, will come; and the third is that the Bible is the Word of God without the possibility of a doubt.

With regard to Christ's coming and being the true Savior, he says:

“For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount.”

The Apostle Peter refers to that time on the Mount of Transfiguration, when he heard the voice of the Father in heaven saying of Jesus, in the presence of Moses and Elijah: This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Now, he says, there is no doubt about it that this is your Savior. I tell you this before I die.

And, he says, I want you to understand furthermore, that though He is the Savior, there will be false prophets, there will be false teachers, and you have no right to think that everybody who comes to you and looks holy and stands behind the Bible is a saved man. He says with regard to this:

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”

In that Peter was not mistaken, as all history demonstrates. There have been many, many false prophets since Peter's death, who have just taught these damnable heresies.

The one thing Peter wanted to hold up above all things is this, that you can fully trust the Word of God. For surely when he saw Christ with his own eyes, and heard the voice of the Father with his own ears, had touched and handled Jesus, he surely felt certain in his own heart and mind that this is the true Savior; but he goes on and says we have a truth that is even more certain:

“We have also a more sure word of prophesy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophesy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophesy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

Then, says Peter, I want you to understand that this Word of God is the Word of the Holy Spirit, and it is as certain as anything you ever saw, as certain as anything you ever heard, as certain as anything you ever felt. In the text of this day the apostle goes on to show the wonderful connection between the Word of God and the world in which we live and the worlds all around us. May the Holy Spirit help us this evening to get wider visions of this great truth as we behold

The Word And The World

I. The Word Knew There Would Be Scoffers

In beholding the Word and the world, our first observation is that the Word knew there would be ignorant scoffers in the world.

“...knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying. Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”

Have you ever seen more scoffers in history than we find in the past three centuries? Take that age in Europe and that age in France when they dethroned the true and living God and set up false gods on the altars of the churches; wasn't that scoffing? And take those people of our own country who have taken the cross of Christ with Him hanging thereon, and run telegraph wires over it, to show that that cross is certainly good for a telegraph pole if for nothing else. If those are not pictures of the scoffing generation among whom we are living, I do not understand what Peter means, nor what history is. Why is it we have so many people in the present day that never see the inside of a church, that never go where they can hear a sermon, that never study God's Word? It is because they are doing just what Peter said they would, they are living after their own lusts; they cannot bear the light of God's Word; every time they hear a sermon it stirs up their consciences, and they go home and cannot sleep, and they make up their minds it is far better to stay away from the light and the truth and let conscience go to sleep, and scoff at religion. The question with them is that if John said, "Behold, He comes quickly," how does it come He didn't

come? They say. You have been standing at the graves of the dead for the last six thousand years, saying ashes to ashes and dust to dust, with the hope of a resurrection to eternal life, and their ashes are lying there yet. Why doesn't God come and raise them up? You have been talking about this great last day, about the wonderful Judgment, but we hear these sermons all our lives, and our fathers heard them, and this old earth is just as solid as it ever was, and it will stand forever and ever, you don't know what you are doing; you are a set of fools and you better stay at home, eat, drink, and be merry and have a good time; the world isn't coming to an end; the Judgment is all the folly of priests, and consequently we would ask you to come out and scoff with us. In a hotel not very long ago a young man sat up in the presence of the company and said to all around who were laughing at his sport, "The old Bible has been prophesying this and that, and there isn't one prophesy in it that ever came true, in spite of what the preachers say." An old farmer sitting by heard this remark and said: "I am going to prove to this crowd that the old Bible don't make any mistakes. I want to show this crowd that the Apostle Peter knew two thousand years ago that you would be here tonight," and then he read these words: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts;" and the crowd laughed the young man to shame, and said, "Now shut up." He had just been fulfilling the Word of God himself in that very moment; for the Word of God knew that these scoffers would come into the world.

II. The Word Created And Formed The World

Not only is it true that the Word knew that scoffers would come into the world, but the Word created and formed the world.

"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water."

What a beautiful vision that verse gives us of the Word and the world. Some people seem to think that the Word of God lies within the pages of a Book called the Bible, but the Apostle Peter says, if you get your eyes open as you ought to get them open, you will realize that this Word made all the worlds, and therefore there isn't a star that you can behold at night that isn't

a spark of the lamp of God's Word; there isn't a sun nor moon in all the different planets that does not belong to the fruits of this great Word of God. Why, says the Apostle Peter, if you were not as ignorant as the old scoffers are, you would know that when you stumble over a stone that you stumble over what God's Word made. There isn't a fish in the sea; there isn't a bird in the air; there isn't an insect flying around the lights; there isn't a worm crawling its way through the dust in the ground; there isn't a grass nor a flower; there isn't a tree nor a leaf; there isn't a thing in the world that God has not made with His Word.

And the Word of God not only called all things into existence but has molded and shoved them around until the waters cover the earth, and at the same time the islands come out of the water. Says the Apostle Peter:

“For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water.”

I would like to have you get this vision that Peter gives us in order that you may not walk around on earth like some irrational animal, like the swine with his ears hanging over his eyes, looking for acorns; the thing to do is to remember that God created you erect, to stand on two feet, with eyes that can look both forward and upward; wherever you see anything, remember that the things you hold in your hand, the things you touch, the things you see, are God's Word in expansion.

III. The Word Overflowed The Whole World

Again, with regard to the Word and the world, observe that the Word overflowed the whole world.

“Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.”

Do not forget that time of the world when God said to Noah, I will give the world one hundred and twenty years to repent; do not forget that Noah was a preacher of righteousness; do not forget that the people scoffed then already and said these things cannot be. Why, though the people in that age as they think even now, those who are ignorant, how could there be enough

water in this world to cover over the hills and the mountains and the highest trees fifteen cubits? But remember, my friends, that the same Word that made the worlds could make water; and so when the ark was finished and Noah had taken two of every kind, and seven of those for sacrifices into the ark, then God's Word said, Ye windows of heaven open; and they opened; and, Ye fountains of the deep burst forth; and they burst forth: and the waters from the earth below and the waters from the heavens above came and leaped and roared over the hills and valleys and over the mountains and tree tops, until the last breath of man went down with the bubbling waters, and the shoreless surface bore up the ark which had no rudder, for there was no shore to steer to. God's Word overflowed the whole world, and today on the mountain tops of all the world lie the little monuments of stones made up of sea shells, in order that philosophy and science must acknowledge that the hills and the mountains and the flood of old were all the result of the mighty Word of God.

IV. The Word Regulates And Preserves The World

The Apostle Paul insisted upon it that we must have a clear view of God's Word, for, he says the Word regulates and has been preserving the world.

“But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”

When you look at your geography you will find a picture of the world resting upon the shoulders of Atlas, the great man holding the world. If you ask heathen philosophy what is it that holds up this world, it tells us it is a great sea turtle that has the world resting upon it. If you ask, where is the sea turtle, they tell us, in the great sea; if you ask them how is the great sea held, by what shores, they say, we do not know. Philosophy has never been able to tell us how things began nor ended, but the great Word of God that called the world into existence, and overflowed the world with the great flood, is today holding the worlds in their places, and they dare not move out until the Word says, I will let go. And why is it that this world is just where it is? why is it that it turns on its axis just as it does? why is it that it

turns just as fast as it does? why is it that all the heavenly bodies are running in their regular spaces and are not moving outside the given orbit? It is because they are held there by the mighty Word of God. Now, says the Apostle Peter, in order that you may get a wider idea of the power of the Word, I want you to understand that it is not Atlas; it is not some great imaginary sea turtle; it isn't even the hand of God; it is the Word of God that is holding the worlds and keeping them day by day for that great day to come.

V. The Word Regulates Time In This World

Observe, too, that the Word and the world hold this relation: The Word regulates time in this world.

“But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward.”

A great many of us are asking the question, Why is God waiting so long? We have been praying and praying that the Lord might come, said the people of old, but why does He not come? They hung their harps upon the willow's and said. Watchman, what of the night? They looked for the coming Savior, and some thought He never would come. They forgot that for the eternal God a thousand years are as one day, and a day as a thousand years. For a little insect that can be born in the morning and can die in the evening, an hour seems terribly long; and for us who are born in one generation and die the next, it seems a long while to wait, but for God, who is from eternity to all eternity, a thousand years is as a day, and a day as a thousand years, and if the Lord God has been holding off a little longer than you expected with the answer to your prayers, remember that the arithmetic of heaven isn't the same as the mathematics of our schools; remember that the eternal God has an arithmetic of His own, and He never loses one moment; never loses an hour; His watch never runs down; His time is just exactly right, and on the great Judgment Day we will find that the Word does not reckon time like the world does. God's train always comes in on schedule time.

VI. The Word Is Here To Save The World

Next observe that the Word is here to save the world.

“The Lord is... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

I wish I could make every one in this house grasp that thought. I wish I could talk to you a few moments as if you and I were all alone, sitting on the palm of God’s hand; I would show you that you are born in a state that cannot be saved unless you are born again; I would show you that God loves you too well and loves heaven too well, to permit you to enter heaven with your sinful nature and thereby make a hell of heaven; I would show you that the Lord has made this earth with His Word, and has preserved it, for the purpose that you might hear this Word and be saved; I would show you that God wants you to know the Ten Commandments in order that you might know His will, what you are to do and what you are not to do. I wish I could make you understand that the law of God is perfect and you are imperfect; that the perfect law condemns you because you are imperfect. I would that you might understand that this Word shows you how Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, took upon Himself your own nature, in order that you might be innocent while you are guilty, and died upon the cross for you, because you are a miserable lost sinner, in order that He might save you by grace. I wish I could tell you this story until your eyes are filled with tears; until you would cry, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me? Thanks be to God, I shall be delivered through Jesus Christ, as Paul wrote in his beautiful epistle. I wish you might understand that if you feel this evening that you are lost it is not the Bible’s fault; it is not the preaching of the Gospel’s fault; it is not God’s fault; it is not the fault of the prayers of Christians; it is not the fault of the holy angels; it is not the fault of Jesus Christ – He died for you; pray tell me, what more do you want Him to do for you than to lay down His life for you, and conquer death, and rise again, and plead with you every hour of your life? That, my friends, is the message of the Word. “Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

VII. The Word Will Start A Fire Which Will Purify The World

Observe that the Word will soon start a fire that will purify the world.

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.”

And above, in the 7th verse, we read:

“By the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”

One night Belshazzar of old sat with his wife and concubines drinking wine out of the gold and silver vessels stolen from the temple at Jerusalem, highly praising the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, wood and of stone, when all at once his knees began to tremble, and his face grew pale, for he saw on the wall a hand writing *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*, which means in our language that he was weighed in the balances and found wanting; that the kingdom would be divided, taken from him; and that night Belshazzar perished. My dear friends, let us not forget that the hand is on the wall writing for us today these memorable facts: The Word is now holding the fire back. The Word will suddenly unite the fires of the heavens and the earth. The Word is now ready to burn in our hearts.

The Word is now holding the fire back. Remember it is said here, “reserved unto fire against the day of judgment.” Some people wonder why it is, if this world is going to burn up that it doesn’t burn. Why, it is burning, my friends. A man must be in ignorance if he does not know that when he is sitting in his home and warming his hands at the gas that it is God’s fire coming out of the earth now to warm him; and I am here to say this evening on the authority of God’s Word, that if this Word did not hold the fire back, you and I would never get out of this church alive. Why is it that the gas in the very bowels of the earth does not break forth and burst everything to pieces? It is because it is being held back by the surface around, which is the almighty Word of God. Notice the picture that Peter gives of the Word. The Word is holding the fire back for the Judgment Day. We know that the

earth is full of fire; we know that every relic that has ever come to us from the planets on high has gone through fire, and so I would have you to understand that the only reason that the end of the world has not come yet is because of the power of the Word of God that can hold it back a little while longer.

The day is coming when the Word will suddenly let go; then you will see such a fire as you never saw before. There are three words in the Bible which are translated world; the one is “γῆ,” which simply means the earth; the other is “χόσμος,” which means the present formation of the earth; the third is “αἰών” which means the time of the world. Now some people imagine that when Peter says the earth is going to burn up, it is going to be annihilated. The earth is going to burn; it is not going to be annihilated. There will be a fire starting forth all over the earth, and it will come down from the heavens, and we will have a fire picture of the flood of old. When God destroyed the world the first time. He did it with water, bursting forth from the earth and pouring from the open windows of heaven; but when the next destruction comes, it will not be water then, it will be that God’s Word will say, Now, fires, break loose; now roar, ye heavens and earth; and such a cracking and noise and thundering you will never hear before. You have heard in the Word of God that when Christ comes he will blow the trump. I suppose you thought He would come with a horn in His mouth. Every star shall be part of His trump; the whole universe shall roar and thunder and burn; then the Word of God will say, Now I will burn this earth and make it pure; I will burn up all the dross of all the bodies; and the heavens shall roar and crack and come together by the same mighty Word of God again until every heavenly body and the earth itself shall become a mansion of the Father’s house.

“In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.”

The Apostle told us in last Sunday’s lesson that we shall meet Him in the air. Where else shall we meet Him when the earth drops from under us? Where else can we go but in the air, in the presence of God? And the Judgment is there. The Word will hold those on the right, and those on the left. The Word will say to those on the right. Come; and to those on the left.

Go! Oh, the power of that Word that says. Go! Oh, the power of that Word that holds the earth this evening, reserving it for you and for me, to lives of purification and of light. This Word is now ready to burn in our own hearts.

“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

Oh, the harmony that must exist between the saved in heaven. This evening we are all rather spotted yet; we are all rather full of blame yet; we all lack a good deal of that peace yet; there is only one fire that can ever cleanse us to make us spotless; that can bring into our hearts that peace; that can ever make us blameless, and that is the fire of the Holy Spirit, by whom the Word of God was given, and through whom the worlds are reserved. And therefore I would ask you this evening. How is it with you? Have you still got a grudge at your neighbor? You know which side you will be on when the Judgment Day comes if you do not repent. Are you living a life of uncleanness, and not trying to live a better life? Are you still living in sin, adultery and all bad thoughts, and lust? If so, you know which side you will be on when the Judgment Day comes, if you are not spotless. Are you living a life condemned by your own conscience? Does your own conscience prove to you every day that you are not trying to fight for the right? Keep watch, pray for the higher life; then you will know on what side you will be on that great day. Remember that the same fire that purifies the earth and the heavens and makes a heaven that is spotless, is the same fire in God’s name that wishes to burn in your hearts and in your consciences this evening, and wants you to turn to Jesus Christ, your only Savior, and trust in Him fully, and fight the good fight of faith, that you may receive the crown of eternal life.

My dear friends, it seems to me that if you never have heard a sermon before and never should hear another one, you could not stand before God on the last great day and say, I did not know; I had no opportunity of hearing the truth. Don’t join the scoffers. You will have plenty of time, if you want to scoff, in hell; don’t do it here. Give your heart to God and serve Him right now.

I cannot help but think that there must be many, many people sitting right before me this evening that are not really communicant members of the church yet; there may be some who have never been baptized yet. Now the chance is given next Friday evening to come into my class and there learn just exactly what it is to be a saved man, and then accept the Savior and be saved every hour and every day; and it does seem to me that if you do not accept this invitation you deserve to be lost. I cannot help but think it. God is calling you this evening and it may be this is the last call. Oh come, come, and prepare to meet your God. Prepare just as soon as you can. But you may not reach next Friday evening; this very hour, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. If you are not saved, be sure, before you walk out of this house tonight to say. My God and my Savior, here I am; accept me and I will serve Thee the best that I can; and I will do all I can to obey Thy commandments and trust in Thee until I die. Help me for Jesus sake" Amen.

Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, if this were the last sermon that I were to preach in the world, I would thank Thee for this, another opportunity of giving a last call to all to come to Thee and be saved. Oh, I do thank Thee this evening, my Father in heaven, for being a minister of the Gospel, one called to preach the Word that made the worlds, and is reserving this world until that day when the worlds on high and this one in conflagration shall become the new heaven and the new earth where we shall dwell forever with Thee. Oh, Father in heaven, there is no mistake about Thy plans; Thy plans are good and right, and Thou art carrying them out every day; there is no slackness about Thee; there is nothing wrong with Thy watch; a thousand years in Thy sight are as but a day, and a day as a thousand years. Oh, Father in heaven, help us not to forget that with us a day is not as a thousand years; help us not to forget that with us this day may mean heaven and it may mean hell. Oh, Lord, do Thou help us to realize the value of time; help us right now to give our souls to Him who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass

against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

63. Ten Truths God Wants You To Know Perfectly. *Twenty-Seventh Sunday After Trinity.*

But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. 1 Thes. 5:1-11.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

WHAT THE IMMORTAL SOUL NEEDS is truth. There is one truth that you can find in your hearts; at least sparks of it. I refer to the Ten Commandments. When God created man He planted the law in his heart, and if it had not been for sin coming into the world, that law would be there just as perfect today as it ever was written on the tables of stone or in the Bible. Truth is a mighty power; the soul cannot get away from it. I am the Lord Thy God; thou shalt have no other gods before Me, is a truth that must stand forever. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, is a second truth that must stand forever. Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy, is a truth that the world must recognize. You all know that it is right to honor father and mother; you all know it is right not to kill; you know it is a truth that we

should not commit adultery; you know it is right that we should not steal; that we should not covet our neighbor's house; and you know it is a truth that we should not even covet those things that can be coaxed away from home, like servants or cattle, or anything else that might follow you. These Ten Commandments are truths which lie at the bottom and foundation of all Christianity, and therefore, the Word of God tells us that the law is a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.

In harmony with these ten truths of the Ten Commandments, our epistle, the last one for the Church Year, contains ten great truths we should know, and the apostle calls attention to the fact that we should know them perfectly. "For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." This church at Thessalonica was rather a young church, a congregation not organized very long, but they knew some things that some old churches today seem to have forgotten, and it is my purpose this evening to speak as if this were my last address to immortal souls, and having reached the last sermon in this series of the church year, I want to be as honest with you as I would be with my own children, if I were to speak to them a last word from my dying bed. A man might possibly be dishonest in the days when he hopes to remain here a long time, but surely he could not be dishonest in his last hour; and so the old saying stands, that death makes men honest. These very scoffers that ridicule the church and the preacher are the ones that are groping for something immortal and would like to see the little preacher that lives around the corner just before they pass into eternity. And so I desire in this last sermon of this series, to speak as if this were my last address, and as when a man speaks his last words from his dying bed to his children, he is not paying much attention to his rhetoric. I am not here this evening to give you flights of oratory; I am here to give you some things that you never can get away from, truths so perfectly known that they will follow you into all eternity. My theme is

Ten Truths God Wants You To Know Perfectly

1. The End of the World is Coming

The first is: The end of the world is coming. Some people seem to think that this world is here forever and ever. I would have you to understand that

philosophy has never been able to tell where this world came from. God's Word has solved that problem. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, and that Word of God that brought the worlds into existence, is the same Word that tells us that this earth shall pass away. Jesus Christ, whom all the world must admit to have been a great character, even though they deny His divinity, said: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word shall not pass away. Now if He was a great character He told the truth. If He did not tell the truth, He was not a great character. If He told the truth, He is the Son of God. If He is the Son of God, He knows how this earth came and how it will pass away.

Not only did Jesus Christ Himself tell us that the end of the earth is coming, but as we heard in this evening's lesson, the apostle Peter has so graphically described what would take place: But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." In the last Book of the Bible, Rev. 21:1, we have these remarkable words: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." There is a truth that God wants you to know perfectly. The fires are already burning. No man can pass through the National Park of the United States without seeing the flames and the streams and the geysers throwing the rocks up into the air to tell you that the Word of God is true. I do not suppose the apostle Peter ever saw a geyser, or that he ever knew of the conditions of the earth as we know them today, but no man today with all his powers of writing and thinking and traveling can describe the conditions of the earth better than the apostle Peter did. I say the fires are already burning and the day is coming, says philosophy now, as well as revelation, when this earth must pass away. That you ought to know perfectly.

2. You Do Not Know When The End Is Coming

You ought to know perfectly this great truth, that you do not know when the end is coming. There have been people in this world who have figured out the very month and to the very day, and sometimes almost to the hour, when the world was coming to an end. There have been foolish denominations

who have even put on their clothing, ready to go to heaven. I do not know where they ever got such notions when God's Word is so plain that no man shall know. Jesus Christ told us not only that no man shall know the day nor the hour, but that the angels in heaven do not know, and not even the Son of man, in His state of humiliation. You will remember that when Jesus Christ was here on earth He was in two different states – a state of humiliation, in which He did not make use of His divine knowledge. Now in that state, Jesus Christ Himself did not know when the end of the world would come. In His state of exaltation, of course He knew, but there is one great truth that God has reserved unto Himself. No man, no angel, not Christ Himself in His state of humiliation knew the day when the end would come. We are told in this lesson tonight that He shall come like a thief in the night; He will come at the hour when no man expects it. There will be men in the saloons, drinking and drunk, the night when Christ shall come; there will be people on the dancing floor and in the ballroom that night, scoffing at the Bible and at the Word of God; there will be people all over this world that will say, When is the promise to be fulfilled, and where is the fulfillment, and just then, when no one is thinking about it, in that very hour when all will think, tomorrow we will do so and so, there will be a jar, and a thunder, and a cracking and burning, and a fire, and the world is passing to an end and no one knew it until that time. I want you to know perfectly that you never will know the day nor the hour when it is coming until it has come.

And I rather think it is a good thing that we do not know. If you knew that next year at such and such a time the world was coming to an end you wouldn't do another thing. That is one thing that God has kept to Himself. There would be others who would pretend to serve God, purely out of fear. God wants to be served with love.

3. The End of Your Life is Coming

The next truth which God wants you to know perfectly, is this: That the end of your life is coming. All through the Scriptures you find that man's life and the end of the world are always compared with each other, and in every chapter where Jesus speaks of the end of the world, He also speaks of the end of life. "Be ye therefore ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." Not only as far as the end of the world is concerned,

but the end of your life is coming. Here is one truth that surely does not need very much elucidation. When I make the statement that the end of your life is coming, you know it. You know that all the generations before this past century have died, and you do know that before another century has passed we all shall have fallen asleep.

4. You Do Not Know How Nor When Your End Is Coming

Now then, knowing this great fact that we are here only for a very short time, it seems to me we ought to be wise, and there is another great truth that follows right after the foregoing, and that is, that just as we do not know when the end of the world is coming, just so you do not know exactly how your end is coming, nor when.

It is said sometimes that the Spiritualists know just exactly when a man is going to die. At a meeting in Boston one time, a medium sat there and she said, "Tomorrow at four o'clock I will die," and sure enough at four o'clock the next day she did die, and the news was sent all over the world that the Spiritualists can foretell death just to the hour. Then some men who were rather inquisitive had a post mortem examination held and found that she had taken enough poison to kill three women, at four o'clock. In that way you can know pretty well when you are going to die, if you commit suicide; but even then you may fail. God has kept that back from us to know just when. There are some people who are constantly telling us, You will never see me again, because I am sickly and this will be our last visit together. Oh, I have visited some of these very sickly people for the last twenty years, and they are still living. An then we see once in a while some big, strong, young man that says, I will see you in ten years, and in ten minutes he is in eternity. Know this fact perfectly tonight, no difference what your disease may be, when death comes, it is coming as a surprise. This is even true in cases where we are looking for death every day. There are no fewer than twenty people right now lying upon their beds, whom I visit every week, and I feel certain that there are a few who will never again see their health, but I feel just as certain that though we see death coming on day by day, that when it does really come it will be a surprise to the family and to the one that passes into eternity. Know this perfectly.

5. You Are Lost Until You Are Saved

I would have you to know that you are lost until you are saved. A great many people do not know that. A great many people seem to think that as long as we are in this world we are not lost, that we never will be lost until that great Judgment Day comes, and then God will come with His club in one hand, take a man by the collar and say, Now you are damned. I would have you to understand, my friends, that God never will condemn anybody. If you will read the third chapter of John you will find that we are condemned already. Read Paul's epistle to the Romans, carefully, and you will find that the curse of God is on us until we are saved. Read Christ's conversation with Nicodemus carefully, and you will find that every man on earth, no difference how small or how large, must be born again before he can see and before he can enter the kingdom of heaven. If you will read Paul's epistle correctly you will find that he says, we are by nature the children of wrath. If you will read the Scriptures carefully you will find that not a clean thing comes from an unclean thing. That which is born of flesh is flesh. If the world today understood the Bible doctrine, the Lutheran doctrine, that man is lost by nature until he is saved, you would not find so many errors concerning baptism, and you would not find so many errors concerning original sin; you would not find people putting off from day to day what ought to be done just as soon as our children are born. Jesus Christ assures us in His Word that He is the only One that was ever born without sin, and we all know from God's Word that no sin shall enter heaven. A little use of the brain, together with revelation, ought to convince any man that God is not going to soil heaven with a sinner. Therefore, I want you perfectly to know tonight that if you have not been saved you are lost; you are as much lost tonight as if you were in hell; the curse of God is as much on you right now as it ever can be until you are a saved man. Why, some one says, do you mean to say that God would curse a child? No. I say a child is cursed. God is here to save it. Nor do I say that God will damn a child, but I say before it can be saved God has got to save it. Jesus said, The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost, not that which is saved. Oh, that the world understood this great truth, that man is in a lost condition and will remain so until he is saved.

6. It Isn't God's Will That You Remain Lost

God would have you to know, in the sixth place, this truth perfectly, that it isn't God's will that you should remain lost.

As I said awhile ago, some people picture God as if He were a great angry Judge that delighted in condemning people. If I understand the Bible, and I believe I understand it a little, God, the Father in heaven, does not want anybody lost, or He surely would not have given up His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to die for the sins of the world. If I were to meet a man living within a mile and a half of this city, and I were to go out and visit him and find him all alone, and say. Where is your family? and he were to tell me his wife is lying out in yonder cemetery; and I would say. Where is your son; have you none? Yes, I had one fine young man and when the war came on, though he was under age, he volunteered to go, I said. My boy, you are the only son I have got but go, and fight for your country; and then he went, and he died on the battlefield, and out by the side of his mother's grave stands his tombstone, but his body was never found; if I were then to stand up and say to you, That man is a rebel; if I were to say to you, That man does not love his country, you would say. You are a liar; a man that gives up his only son to die for his country, loves his country; and I am here tonight to say to you as a messenger of God, and on the authority of His Word that shall stand though the heavens and the earth shall pass away, that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. Then I think you will have to admit that God, the Father, does not want you to be lost.

It is not the will of God, the Son, that you should be lost; for remember, my friends, that Jesus Christ had His life in His own hands. Remember, that when He came He did not come against His own will. Remember, it was He who said, I go to Jerusalem that I may die and the third day arise again from the dead. When they came to arrest Him, and with one word He spoke to them, and the soldiers all fell down as dead, it seems to me that any reasonable man should know that Jesus would not need to have been arrested. If He who stood by the grave of Lazarus and said. Come forth, and he arose, had said to all those who tried to nail Him to the cross on Calvary's hill, So far and no farther, you know they could not have crucified Him. But behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world,

merely saying, Here is My almighty arm; I will show you that I am almighty now, not by what I do, but by what I do not do; I will not use that arm to knock you down, but I will hold it still; nail it fast; and here is the other hand; nail it fast; here are My feet; nail them fast; and here is My head; put on the crown of thorns; and here is My face; spit in it if you want to, and buffet Me if you like to; here is My heart; I will bare My breast to you; thrust the spear into it and make the blood and the water come forth, that all the physicians in the world may know that I am dead; hang Me for three hours in the sunlight, that the world may know that I am the Savior; and then at noon the sun shall go down that the world may know that all nature and the works of My creation are in sympathy with Me, says Christ. I will die willingly that you might not be lost. Do you mean to tell me that Jesus Christ, who died for you, is willing that you should be lost?

And do you mean to tell me that the Holy Spirit, who has given us His Word, and today throughout the ministry and in the means of grace all over the world is calling, and calling, and calling for you to come to Christ and be saved, is willing that you should be lost? Oh, know perfectly tonight, that if you ever are lost it is not by the consent of the Father, not by the consent of Jesus, not by the consent of the Holy Ghost.

7. You Are To Be Saved Through Jesus Christ

I would have you know that God wants you to know that you are to be saved through Jesus Christ. “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Wherefore, comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.”

God has appointed you – for what? Not for wrath, but that you might be saved through the Lord Jesus Christ. Where else will you find a Savior? Twelve years ago [1893] in the great city of Chicago, we had a meeting or parliament of all the religions of the world; we had all the heathen religions represented there, but of all religions, there was only one that could say to a poor sinner, here is your Savior. With all the false religions in the world there is absolutely no answer to the question, How can a man be saved? outside of Christianity. Then, my dear friends, if the Jews have no Savior

for you, do you want to worship with them? If the Unitarian does not know Christ as the God-man, are you going to worship with him? If any church in the world points you to your own morality for your hope and salvation, are you going to trust in that? The great trouble with so many people today is that they have heard so much about the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man; they have heard so much of the false teaching that has been taught in organizations that have no Christ in them, that they begin to think that if they just walk so and so, and do so and so, then they are going to be saved because they are so good.

If one man on earth can be saved because he is so good, every other man can; and if there is salvation for one man by being so good without Christ, there ought to be salvation for every man without Christ; and if any man on earth can be saved without Christ dying on Calvary, then I say that God Himself did the dumb thing when He let His Son die there for our sins. My friends, no difference if an angel from heaven came to proclaim any other Gospel than I preach to you tonight, I would say with the apostle Paul, let that angel be accursed. There is no other salvation outside of Jesus Christ; and I do not care if you had lived so good and holy all your life that you had only committed one sin, that one sin would damn you forever. But remember, you do not need to commit a sin to be damned; you are born damned. You are born lost. If that is not true this Bible isn't true; and if that is not true then philosophy is not true. You cannot bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing. How can sinful parents give birth to a sinless child? Any one should know these truths, and so again I lay down deeply the foundation of truth, which I know you know perfectly, that God wants you saved through Jesus Christ.

8. Until You Are Saved, You Are Perfectly Willing Every Moment To Be Eternally Lost

God wants you to know perfectly that until you are saved you are perfectly willing every moment to be eternally lost.

If I were to go around in this house tonight and take one after the other by the hand and say. Are you now willing to be eternally lost? you would say, No, sir! I have never yet met that man in my life who said, I am willing right now to be eternally lost; and yet there are people by the hundreds and

thousands who will tell you that they are not Christians; who will tell you that they have never taken instruction in God's Word to know how to be saved; they will tell you they are not baptized; they will tell you some time or other they hope to be saved. I want to bring you the truth now. I want you to know perfectly that right now, in this hour, if you are not willing to be saved now, you are now willing to be eternally lost, and you are willing to remain eternally lost until you are willing to be saved. The very fact that you are not saved now is evidence that you wouldn't care if you were lost now; and the very fact that you want to try to fool your God is strong evidence that you are perfectly willing not to be prepared to meet Him; and just as long as you are willing to be unprepared, you are willing to be lost; and just as soon as you are willing to be lost at all, you are willing to be eternally lost, for there is no other lost condition. Oh, that God would open your eyes tonight, that God would help you to see what you are willing to do. I want you to know perfectly tonight, and your own reasoning is too good to get away from it, that you are either saved now or you are willing to be saved or willing to be lost forever. You cannot get away from these truths.

9. A Lost Life Is A Perfectly Worthless Life of Darkness

I want you to know that God wants you to know that a lost life is a perfectly worthless life of darkness. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet the hope of salvation."

In other words, says the apostle, if we want to be Christians at all, let us be soldiers for Christ. Put on the helmet of salvation; put on the breastplate of faith and love; put on the whole armor of righteousness; take the sword of the Spirit in our hands; let us go forth as men of God and let our light shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father

in heaven. But, on the other hand, there is a life of darkness, a worthless life of darkness, and that is not worth living.

Now I want to ask you this question: Suppose you are a father and you are not a Christian, what are you worth? What are you worth to yourself? Poor, lost husband in the family, what are you worth to your wife? What are you worth to your children? My friends, I say it tonight, and under the eye of God, if I had the choice to be born or not to be born, I would say if I were to be begotten and born and live in a family with an ungodly father, I would say, blot me out of existence. I pity from the bottom of my heart the children that have been brought into the world and are sitting at the table of an ungodly father. What are you worth? By every action of yours you say to your children, You might just as well be children of the devil as to be a Christian like mother. You are saying by your actions, What is the use to go to church? What is the use to learn God's Word? What is the use to love Christ? I don't. Oh, worthless father in the family, blotting out all the sunshine of hope that there is! What is the father worth in the home if he is an ungodly man? I say a man who is no Christian is ungodly, because ungodly means *gottlos*, to be lost from God.

What is he worth to his neighbors? Oh, if we would stop and think how our neighbors are watching us. One good man in a neighborhood can transform a whole neighborhood; and one bad man in a neighborhood may transform that whole neighborhood. I can take you to a place not twenty miles away from here, where one bad man has ruined a whole neighborhood; and I can take you to a place in a city where one person going in the right spirit has transformed them all to children of light. What is an ungodly man in a neighborhood worth? A child of darkness. Why, I would hate to send my boy to work a day for an ungodly man; he is not safe in his presence; for what a man is, he teaches, I care not who he is; a man that is an infidel is going to teach infidelity wherever he can; a man that is a Christian is going to teach Christ wherever he can; a man that has got a bad character is going to try to make other people bad.

What is a bad man in the home worth? What is a bad woman in the home worth? What is a woman in the home worth if she is not a Christian? Oh, if you were to go into those countries today where there is no Christianity and see the slaves among the women, see how womanhood is crushed down, you would begin to thank God for a Christian land and for Christian churches. It does seem to me that the meanest person on earth to

ridicule religion and Christianity is woman, who has been lifted up only by the cross of Christ.

What is a boy worth in any neighborhood if he does not want the light and the truth? What is the girl worth that is not a virtuous Christian? I want you all to know perfectly tonight that God knows that a lost life is a perfectly worthless life of darkness.

10. To Be A True Christian Is The Greatest Joy and Privilege in the Universe

And God also wants you to know perfectly that to be a true Christian is the greatest joy and privilege in the universe. We are told in these words to comfort one another with the great truth that the children of light are a glory in this world and a blessing. I make the statement this evening that to be a professed Christian and a true Christian is one of the greatest blessings in all the universe. It has well been said by one poet that if an angel from heaven were to come down and find as sweeping the crossing of the street, we would not exchange places with him; and so I say that to be a child of God, a follower of the Lamb, to be a faithful Christian, means to have a blessing that no angel ever had. When life is past and death is o'er and the resurrection has come and passed, and the Judgment is gone, and we are standing in the presence of our God, Oh, we will see something in those marks in the Saviors hands that no angel ever saw. The angels of God know that Christ was crucified; they know that He was in Bethlehem, and they sang songs of peace; they know He arose from the dead, and they rolled the stone away; but there is no angel either in hell or heaven that knows what it means to be saved when you are lost, and to be redeemed, to be a child of God, to live a life of salvation among fallen men, to say a word that will lead somebody out of darkness into light, to lift up humanity, to hold up Christ and Him crucified to a dying, perishing world, to teach mothers the right way to live, to teach fathers how to be husbands and how to be fathers to their children, to lift up the homes of our country, to spread the glorious news of the truth to the world that God loves us; to lift humanity up from the fallen, degraded slums into which Satan has pushed them; to stand up for right at any cost; to live though we die; to see through the grave; to look into eternity, fearless of death, fearless of anything that may come, because

God is our life, and our hope, and our salvation. This is a privilege that no one else can get in all eternity, but those that are saved. Oh, if we all understood the joy of being a child of God, we wouldn't hunt up the silly notions of the world. I am sure there are young men in the world today that think if they were to come into the church of God and become Christians, that then all their joy would be gone. Oh, poor blind souls! They have never even tasted joy. They do not know what it is. All the whirl of the dance and all the laughter of the world is nothing more than the bells of hell to drown conscience. That is not joy. Joy is to know that by the grace of God we have been saved. Joy is to have peace with God and peace with man. Joy means to know that we are in the right for time and forever. Joy means to have a clear conscience, washed clear by the blood of the Lamb. And I would invite you all, if these were my last words ever to be spoken, I would invite you all to study Luther's catechism until you have found the way plain and found your way to Christ; and then be faithful until death and receive the crown of eternal life; and if you will do that, you will spend the greater part of eternity thanking God that you were here tonight. Let us rise in prayer.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the printing press which is able to make Thy Word spread from shore to shore; we thank Thee for the gifted ones who are able to take down Thy message from Thy messenger and give it to the world. We thank Thee for a Providence which has spared our lives and has blessed our ministry throughout the past two years; and we thank Thee for the privilege of proclaiming Thy truth to these immortal souls this evening. And now, Lord our God do Thou be with this message; send it out that it may win souls for heaven, and do Thou help us to know perfectly the ten truths which we have heard, that we may ever walk in the path of right and ever shun the wrong. O Father in heaven, do Thou help us tonight to be touched with Thy mercy to us, and to become very merciful to others. Help us to realize that Thou hast not come into the world to appoint us unto wrath, but unto life eternal through Jesus Christ. Help us to realize tonight, O God, that Thy love is so great that only by bleeding and dying couldst Thou manifest it to us as Thou wouldst have us understand it. And now we pray Thee that those who have heard this truth tonight may not

only hold fast to it themselves but spread it among others; yes, every one who has heard these truths spread them among the neighbors until many shall hear of Thee and of Thy glorious life and liberty which Thou art willing that we shall enjoy. Father in heaven, do Thou save us all. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ who taught us in that beautiful prayer to call for all things that we need for our bodies and for our souls:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

64. Are Church Suppers Right?

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.
Psalm 24:1.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

CONGREGATIONS, the same as Christian individuals, must be in the right if they expect to succeed. There is no such thing as success against the will of God. There is no such a thing as failure when we are in harmony with God's will. And this is just as true with regard to minor things as to the major. There is not a congregation in the State of Ohio, no difference to which denomination it belongs, in which there are not some people who are opposed to what is generally known as church suppers; and I may be just as safe in saying that there are very few congregations in which there are not some people who want church suppers, and therefore it is a question in almost every individual congregation, is it right to have them? I have so often called attention to this fact before, that wherever there is a question that is always a question, there must be something back of it, or it wouldn't be a question. You never hear any one going up and down among the congregation asking whether it is right to sing a hymn; asking the question. Is it right to pray? Is it right to honor father and mother? There are questions that are settled, and settled forever. Those things that are questions usually have something about them that is not right, or there would be no question.

Now it is not my purpose this evening to speak on this question having in mind this or that individual, or this or that church, or even anything that I have ever said before this evening. I have little use for a man who simply thinks that what he said two years ago must stand whether it was right or wrong. I had hardly arrived at Mansfield until the question was put directly

to me by prominent members of this church, Where do you stand on the church supper question? showing me plainly that it was a question long before I came here, and it has been a question ever since; and few have been the Sundays in which I have not been cornered somewhere to find out where I stood on such and such a point of this supper question, and I tried for a long time to evade the question for the reason that it was comparatively a new thing in my practical ministry. This is the first church I have ever served that had suppers. We never needed any in any of the congregations where I have been, and so I said to myself, I will wait; I will see; I will go; I will eat with them, and I will examine these things from all sides, and whenever I come to a conclusion they will hear from me. Now I have very carefully, especially in the last few weeks, studied the Word of God prayerfully, with the disposition of mind to start with, that I do not know whether it is right or wrong, in order that I might not be prejudiced. I said to myself. If these things are right we all ought to know it; and if these things are wrong, we all ought to know it. Why should Christian people who are directed entirely by the Word of God, have different opinions about things that must be settled somewhere in the Bible? And so I have gone through the Bible from beginning to end, and will only be able to give you a very little result of the investigation. I intend to ask the question tonight, and answer it:

Are Church Suppers Right?

But sometimes some questions can never be answered, because people have not laid the right foundation. For instance, I would never argue the question of whether it is right or wrong to belong to the Masons with a Jew; I would not argue that question with a man who simply does not know what the doctrines of the Church are; I would not debate that question with any man who himself has never been thoroughly catechized; for the trouble with too many people is that they have not got a foundation that enables them to see what others see who have laid the foundations. The same is true with regard to the question of whether church suppers are right or not, there are certain foundations that must be examined first, and the very foundation of all church suppers lies in my text:

“The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.”

I. This World Belongs To God

This world belongs to God. Could anybody deny that proposition? There are some people in this world who think that they own part of it; there are some people again who think that they own only a part of what they claim, and God owns the rest. How many professed Christians are there in the world who do acknowledge the exact truth that they own nothing; that it all belongs to God? You can readily see that from these different foundations you would have different arguments. I claim, on the authority of my text, and on the authority of good reason, and on the authority of all Providence in history, that all the earth and the fullness thereof belong to God; and if that is true, it will help us to answer our question in the future. What makes me believe this?

I believe it, because it is His by creation. You must remember that man was not the first being that was created in the world, but the last. If there ever was any gold created, it was created before there was a man. To whom did the gold belong before there was an Adam and Eve? To whom did those shores belong of those four rivers that started out from the Garden of Eden? To whom did the gold belong on which shone the sun before there ever was a man to behold its brightness? I am sure that He who said, Let there be light, and there was light; He who said. Let there be a firmament, and there was a firmament; He who said. Let there be vegetation, and there was vegetation; He who said. Let there be a sun to rule the day and a moon to rule the night; that same God created all things, and by the right of creation has a right to claim it.

“The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.”

Usually a man possesses what he owns until he wills it away. I hold before me tonight the Will of my God. Sometimes we call it the Old Testament and the New Testament. When you make your will you make your testament; and I look into this Testament and find out what God has done with His possessions, and I do not find anywhere that He has ever willed away one dollar of His gold or of His silver. I find, for instance, as I read this Book, the following items taken from His Will:

Melchizedek said: “Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth.” (Gen. 14:19).

I read from Deut. 10:14: “Behold the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord’s thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is.”

I read from my text: “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.” Haggai 2:8: “The silver is mine and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.” 1 Cor. 6:19: “Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price.”

Now from these words we not only learn that God claims the heavens and the earth as His, but we are His by creation, and no man has a right to say, I own myself. And as I go back in this Will toward the end, and look at the codicil, if you might call it so, I find these words: (Rev. 22:18-19):

“If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

If there is anything plain, it is this, that God claimed the heavens and the earth by creation. When making His will He said He never would give them up. They are His.

Not only is it true that all these things belong to God by creation and His will, but it is just as true that they belong to Him by Providence. It is sometimes hard for us to conceive the great fact that in less than one century every man on earth will be sleeping under the ground. No wonder that Xerxes of old wept when he saw his large army and remembered that in a very short time they would all be among the armies of the dead. If man could possess the world, why would he not keep it? If you can possess what is your own, why do you not hold fast to it forever and forever? But when John D. Rockefeller or one of the Rothschilds die, they die just as empty handed as poor Lazarus at the gate of the rich man. I repeat it, my friends, if man owns the earth why doesn’t he keep it? Providence is going to settle this question for every man, that the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.

II. The Church Belongs To God

Now then, when we begin the argument from the greater to the smaller admission that all the world belongs to God, I am sure that you are compelled by the severest logic to admit the second fact which I now state, and that is: This temple belongs to God, – Its structure; its doctrines; its support.

The very structure of this church belongs to God. I would have you to understand that the first great tabernacle was planned by God and not by man; furthermore, that He planned it according to the great house which He built. The Apostle Paul tells us that at one time a certain man, referring to himself, was lifted up to the third heaven. Now whether he meant the skies as the first heaven, and the sidereal heaven as the second, and the eternal home of the saints as the third; or whether he meant this earth that shall become the new heaven as the court, and the distance from here to the heaven above as the holy place, and heaven itself the Holy of Holies, I do not know; but he divided the whole great universe into three departments. When God gave the command to build the tabernacle. He had it built the same way; and when the great church temple was built in Jerusalem, God laid the plan and told them just how it should be built. Now you will find that from the Garden of Eden down to the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, God gave the command for all His altars and all His temples. The temple of God here on earth is a structure planned by Him, whom some organizations please to call the great Architect of the universe.

I would call your attention just for a moment to the service of the Lutheran Church in laying a corner stone and in dedicating the church. When the cornerstone of this church was laid, the following words were read by the officiating pastor:

“We do now lay this corner stone as a foundation of the First English Evangelical Lutheran Church, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. May true faith and piety and brotherly love ever dwell here, and may this place be dedicated to prayer and to the preaching of the Gospel and the ministry of the sacraments of our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, true God, from everlasting to everlasting.”

I read this service for the purpose of stirring up the minds of some people who generally imagine that a church is only from the floor up to the ceiling. We have some people who imagine that just as soon as you get into the basement of the church, that that part was not dedicated to God. Now I want

you to understand that you did not lay the cornerstone in the building; you laid it in the foundation; and when you laid that foundation, you dedicated the whole foundation, not only down to the ground, but down under the ground, to the Lord God in His service and His service only; and when that corner stone was laid, it was laid with the view that this shall be the foundation of a great house of God that is to be built, and when Jesus Christ was pleased to give Himself a beautiful name. He said that He was the Cornerstone, not the steeple; He was the Cornerstone in the basement, not a brick in the tower; and it does seem to me that this ought to help us to see really what a temple of God is. When we come to the dedicatory service the following prayer was offered (Compare Ministerial Acts 131-132):

“Almighty and everlasting God, let Thy favor be upon this house which we have built for Thy glory, to be a memorial to Thy name, a dwelling place for Thine honor, and a house of prayer for Thy people. Accept it, O Lord, as Thine own, and vouchsafe unto us Thy holiness to the end that our going in and coming out may be blessed from this time forth, even forevermore, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen,”

Now it does seem to me that that sets apart the temple of God as a building alone for His honor, for the administration of His holy sacraments, and for prayer.

Not only is it true that the structure is God’s, but I would call your attention to the fact that the doctrines are God’s. What are the doctrines of this church? You can find them in the little catechism of Luther; the Ten Commandments; the Apostles’ Creed; the Lord’s Prayer; Holy Baptism; the Office of the Keys, together with the Lord’s Supper, as given in the Word of God, which is itself the Will of God, making known to us our Savior, through whom we can live as the best citizens in this world and become citizens on high. Now we hold to the inspiration of the Word of God from beginning to end; we hold to baptism for every soul that shall enter heaven, as God’s plan; we hold that communicants should receive the Lord’s Supper, and consequently that these doctrines are God’s doctrines, and this church was not built for the promulgation of any error, or, as Peter declared in his second letter, of “damnable heresies;” this church of God was built for no other purpose than the proclamation of the law and the Gospel as recorded in the Inspired Word.

Not only is it true that these doctrines are God’s, but it is also true that the support of the temple is God’s. Now a great many people have false

ideas about the supporting of a church. They seem to think that we support the church, when the fact is that God has always supported His own church. If you would understand the text. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein, you surely would soon see the correct conclusion that God has made arrangements to support His church. How has He done it? If you will follow the story of the Bible carefully you will find that from the beginning of the world until the end of it. He arranged that the people should become stewards, and give a certain part of that which was placed in their hands for the support of His temple; otherwise you would not understand at all what it meant when Cain and Abel offered sacrifices. Whoever told them to offer sacrifices? God must have done it. Now I have got one light on the difference between Cain's and Abel's sacrifices, during this investigation, that I never had before. I knew very well that Cain's sacrifice was not pleasing to God, and I always supposed the reason was because he brought fruit instead of a lamb, because a lamb, you know, is the only one of the two mentioned that has blood, and where there is no shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. I always supposed the reason that Cain's sacrifice was not acceptable to God was because he refused to bring something that had blood, and chose fruit instead. Now, that may be the reason yet, but I have discovered on very close investigation, that there was another reason. When you study what God said to Cain, when he began to hang his head, and feel displeased, and compare that with Heb. 11:4, where God, through the author of that epistle, says that Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice, you will discover that Cain was a church member that refused to bring the offering that God demanded of him. He was one of those men who, rather than bring a lamb, or bring a tenth of his income, virtually said: a little apple will do, and so he brought a little fruit, and said, God don't need what He wants; but Abel brought what God wanted. The one sacrifice was pleasing; the other was not. Why? Because the one was willing to let God's Church be supported as He had planned it and the other was not.

When we come on down in history we find that there was a little war down at Sodom and Gomorrah, and Abraham started out and recaptured his nephew Lot, and brought back the spoil, and Melchizedek began to call out: "Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth." Then what did Abraham do? He said to the High priest, Here is the one-tenth of my income. Where did Abraham learn that? Surely he learned it

from God. And right here let me call attention to the fact that there is not a heathen nation on earth that does not sacrifice the one-tenth to some of their gods. Where did they learn it? It has come down from the very Garden of Eden to the human race.

We find Jacob sleeping with his head upon a stone and in that night he sees a ladder reaching to heaven, and he hears the Father calling down to him, and in the morning he arises and says, Surely the Lord God is here, and he dedicated that little stone as the foundation of the future church; and he called the place Bethel, and said if the Lord would take care of him he would henceforth give Him the one-tenth of his income, and he did, and Laban prospered because Jacob gave the one-tenth, God took care of His temple.

You can follow from that story on through the Old Testament, and you will find that the Jews of old never gave less than the one-tenth of their income to the Lord their God, as God's share of His own possessions. God provides for the temple.

And when we come to the lesson which I read tonight, in the last book of the Old Testament, the question is: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say. Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings." You all know that a tithe means the one-tenth. God declared on the last page of His Old Testament Will that the people had robbed Him because they had not given the one-tenth of their income to the support of His temple; and then goes on to say: "Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation." The average Christian seems to think when he has a dollar in his pocket it is his own, to spend as he pleases, and does not remember that the one-tenth of all his income is God's own provision for the support of His temple and the support of His work. We often look around in our orchards and fields and wonder why the blight has struck this tree and this vine; we wonder why the grasshoppers have destroyed these crops. My friends, we have the answer in God's Word:

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed."

Does it pay you to keep that one-tenth in your pocket, when God goes and destroys your crops? Does it pay you to try to rob your God? I want you to understand that when God has got a one-tenth interest in your business He is not going to let it fail. If I wanted to go into business with any one tonight I would want to go in with a man I could depend on, and the reason some of us never succeed in this world is because we go into business without God. Take God into your business as a partner and that business cannot fail until God fails. Someone will say, That is Old Testament doctrine. Very well, let us see what the New Testament says. Matt. 23:23:

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe (one-tenth) of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone:”

If that does not settle the tithe question in the New Testament, nothing can. Speaking of tithes Jesus Christ says to those old Pharisees, Your giving the tenth is all right, and you ought to do it, but do not leave these other things undone. Will you not all agree with me that in Old Testament times there was not the great demand for the support of the great Church of God that there is now; when the whole civilized Christian land was a little Holy Land only 40 miles wide and about 150 miles long, and now the gates of all the heathen nations have been broken down, until the whole world is crying out, Come over and help us! are not the demands ten times, a thousand times, a million times, greater than they ever were before? But in Old Testament times the Jews reached down into their pockets and never gave less than the one-tenth of their income, and they are doing it today yet, while we professed Christians instead of that are reaching down into our pockets and trying to find a little copper with a hole in it, the smallest little thing we can find, to support the great temple of God, and then trying to establish methods God never did establish in order to carry on His work.

III. Are Church Suppers Right?

This being true, that the world is God's, that the temple belongs to God, with all its structure, with its doctrines, and with its support, I now come to

the question. Are church suppers right? And I am going to answer it according to the Scriptures and say. Some are not, and Some are right.

1. Some Are Not Right

What are some of these church suppers that are not right? Some are as bad as idolatry. Where do I find that in God's Word? Turn to 1 Cor. 11:18-22:

“For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating every one taketh before the other his own supper; and one is hungry and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.”

Here we have an instance where the Corinthians instead of celebrating the Lord's Supper made a feast in the house of God, and Paul takes them to task. Compare this just one moment with Phil. 3:18-19. Sometimes we are criticized for being a little plain. I was criticized a few weeks ago for saying a certain word over in St. Matthews church, and I just happened to get a word that Paul put into this letter to the Philippians:

“For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things.”

If that is not idolatry I don't know what is, and the lowest idolatry I think that can be found in all the world, is the man that worships his stomach. Now we have got a little regard yet for a man that will get down in his ignorance and worship before a beautiful statue made of stone; we have some regard for the man that possibly will rise above the God that has ears and hears not, that has eyes and sees not, and worships his own children; or there are some who worship even their own intellect; now worshipping your own intellect is not nearly so low as to go right into the center of your body and hunt out something that has neither bone nor blood, and just stuff it with anything you can find for a quarter and say, This is my little god. There are, I say, suppers in this world that are as bad as idolatry. And am I

wrong? I could mention you the names of at least twelve people – there may be hundreds of them – whom I have seen come to our suppers time and again, and sit down there and eat, and eat, and eat, and go home, and never think of stepping up here to the service. If those people are not stomach worshipers, I know no other name for them, and I say that such suppers are worse than any form of idolatry I have ever found.

There are some kinds that are as bad as a gambling den. Let us compare Word of God with Word of God. John 2:13-16: Remember that this is but the beginning of Christ's ministry.

“And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting; and when He had made a scourge of small cords. He drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; and said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not My Father's house a house of merchandise.”

This, you remember, was the beginning of Christ's ministry. The reason He gives that He drove them out was because the church of God was not a business house, nor a merchant house. I hear some people say. Why, don't you sell hymnbooks; don't you sell devotional books in the church? Yes. And I want to tell you just how much we have made out of the whole business. I am just exactly four hundred dollars poorer today than when I came to Mansfield; that is the merchandise part of my business. Would you like to do that kind of business? There is no merchandise business done by the pastor of this church; he has lost more money in books than he ever got. I claim that we must distinguish now between things that must be done for the glory of God and simply carrying on a hotel for the purpose of making money. This was the beginning of Christ's ministry; let us go to the close of His ministry. Matt. 21:12,13.

“And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them. It is written. My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple and He healed them.”

I just want you to notice one thing, in the beginning of Christ's ministry they just did business; in three year's time they were carrying on a

gambling den, making the house of prayer a house of thieves.

Now, my friends, I do not want you to draw the conclusion that that has ever been done in this church. I do not believe I have ever seen anything in the gambling line in this church, but we do know that many things have been done in the churches in this country that would not stand the test in any court of common pleas. When a few weeks ago the ministerial association of Columbus went to Mayor Jeffries and said, "We beg of you to stop raffling for turkeys on Thanksgiving Day," the honorable Mayor said, "Just as soon as you preachers stop the gambling in your churches I will stop it down in the saloons." I can imagine I see those preachers coughing behind their hands and saying. We didn't think about that. I have heard about a sweet cake that wasn't worth fifty cents sold for fifteen dollars; I have heard about a quilt you wouldn't have on your bed sold for twenty-five dollars, by churches; and then we think we are doing God's work. I tell you, my dear friends, if the church of God is ever to wield the influence it must wield for the good of this world, it has got to stop gambling.

Some are worse than a poor house. I refer you again to Malachi 3:8: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me." If I were to come to your house this week and begin to beg for John D. Rockefeller, you would think I was crazy, and yet we have learned tonight from our text that the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. The temple is God's; the gold is God's; the silver is God's; and then we go out into the world and ask every Tom, Dick and Harry to come to the church supper and help support this poor God of ours. I do not believe that God ever blessed a single dollar that came from any man that did not love Him, and I do not believe He wants any churches to prosper, to get their funds from the children of the devil. I do not believe that our God has gotten so poor yet that we have got to beg for Him. When we once learn God's eternal truth that the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, we will be willing to hand back to Him what He needs for the upbuilding of His kingdom; and I am satisfied that if we would study this text of mine thoroughly and prayerfully, we would get rid of our miserly hearts, and of our stinginess and of our prodigality. A man walks down street and says, I don't believe in giving to that begging church, but will reach into his pocket and spend ten dollars of God's money in a saloon. He has no right to do it. It is God's gold. You are responsible for every dollar that God has placed in your hands, and when He calls for a

worthy cause He is calling for His own. We can read the old poem, “Over the hills to the poorhouse,” with tears rolling down over our faces, and then we can go and laugh and have a jolly time begging for the people to come in and eat soup for God’s sake. There you have the picture of the human race, the man that is constantly needing to be directed by the Word of the eternal God.

Some are worse than a theater. I am speaking now of those suppers that are to be condemned. Some are actually worse than a theater. Out in Indiana when the young people wanted to get an altar for the church, what did they do? They got up an entertainment at the opera house, blackened their faces, and acted as minstrels, to get an altar to celebrate the Lord’s Supper. Think of it! If I want to go to a show I will go to a theater. I never saw a church yet that could give as good a show as a theater. I am not speaking about instructive lessons. If you will go and hear Mrs. Monroe give “Cromwell,” or “Luther,” you will learn something that you cannot get anywhere else; but whenever we find suppers that are gotten up simply for the sake of having a whole lot of fun in order to help our poor God along, I say they are worse than any theater. Just think of professed Christians having tea meetings, bazaars, concerts, kissing parties, voting lotteries, dumb socials, neck-tie parties, and all sorts of schemes to raise money for our poor God, and then hypocritically singing in church the next Sunday:

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a tribute >far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

The miserable hypocrites! Those suppers are not right and every sensible man knows they are not right.

Some suppers lead to irreverence in God’s house. That should be condemned by every true Christian. If I were to lead a stranger, blindfolded, into my study, during any service, I am sure he would not know from the noise in the vestibule that this is the house of God. In a church where there are no entertainments for pleasure and no church suppers, you will find that the people reverence that house as God’s house, but when people are allowed to act as in a theater in the basement, you may expect them to act the same in the auditorium. The result is that this house has not had the

reverence it should have had by many people. Yet we thank God for the wonderful improvement.

2. Some Are Right

Are any church suppers right? I am sure that Supper was right up in yonder little room when Jesus Christ said in the night in which He was betrayed,

“Take eat, this is My body which was given for you. This do in remembrance of Me. Take, drink, this is My blood which was shed for you and for many for the remission of sins. This do as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of Me.”

No question ever arose in all the world, my friends, whether it is right to have the Lord’s Holy Supper or not. That is right.

The Lord’s beneficent supper is all right. If you will read Matt. 12:4 and compare that with 1 Sam. 21:6, you will find that there are sometimes occasions when we can eat a supper in a church that is all right. They criticized the Lord Jesus on that occasion. Why, He said, did you never hear the story of David, how he went to Ahimelech, and even went into the holy place and begged for five loaves of bread off of that table that he might eat, and he ate it with God’s blessings? Have you not heard time and again how the Lord Jesus Christ fed the four thousand and the five thousand; and do we not know that wherever we are assembled with the Lord Jesus Christ there is the church? Have you not read how even after the morning of Christ’s resurrection, walking along the sea shore He stopped and fried a little fish and called for His disciples to come and eat with Him. There are beneficent suppers that the church of God can give with His blessing. In Philadelphia and in New York there are churches that have established missions where they feed the poor hungry tramp, and give him a good meal, and then invite him back into the chapel to hear God’s Word. No man on earth ever asked the question, Is that right? It is right. And I am inclined to think that if the First Lutheran Church of Mansfield, Ohio, would go and establish a supper place in God’s name and say, Now here, you poor drunken sot, instead of going to the saloon come here and get a bite to eat and a cup of coffee for a cent, we would have more prosperity in our spiritual matters. Those are beneficent suppers and they are right, but they are not gotten up for the purpose of making money.

And then there is one other kind of supper in the church of God that is right, and that is the Lord's social supper. How often the Lord Jesus Christ went up to Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus, and ate with them. Any question about that? That was a social supper. And do you remember how He went into the house of Simon the leper just a few days before His crucifixion and ate there with His friends? There is one thing we do not know about that supper; we do not know what the menu was; we don't know whether they had bread or not; we don't know whether they had more than one article. Just before the Lord's supper when Judas was to betray Christ we would gather the inference there was only one dish on the table, a very simple little supper, but one thing that we know up at the house of Simon the leper, while we do not know what the bill of fare was, we do know what the collection was. Mary came in and anointed the Savior with ointment that cost her three hundred pence, and in those days a day's labor, according to the parable, was a pence, and three hundred pence meant for her three hundred days of earning, and, counting the Sabbath out, she gave just about the wages of one year's work to the Lord Jesus there in that little supper. That was a free will offering, and that was right.

And I would call your attention to the fact that when the Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead, and they were trying to find Him and could not, two men were walking the distance of seven miles up to Emmaus, and all at once they find a third man at their side, and they were talking about that wonderful transaction up at Jerusalem, when this Stranger began to talk to them and they felt a burning about their hearts, they felt the Divine presence, and as they came to the doorway, and night was coming on, they said. Come in and abide with us; He went and they sat down to supper where there was some bread, and He began to bless that bread, when Lo, and behold! they saw that the hands that were blessing the bread had holes in them, and they discovered it was Jesus. – Jesus, at a social supper, and Oh, what a blessing! And all at once He is not there, and those two tired travelers went back all the way those seven miles to Jerusalem, and said, Did not our hearts burn within us while we were talking with Him by the way? and a few moments more and Jesus was back there in the midst of His disciples saying. Peace be unto you. He had had a beautiful supper that night. That was the church, where Jesus and those two young men were gathered together.

Now, what shall I say tonight in conclusion? I thank my God that on next Wednesday evening the Earnest Workers of this church have resolved to try what I call God's plan; they are going to have a good social where we can come together and shake hands and get acquainted, and I believe they intend to give a little something to eat, but I do not care whether they do or not, and if I knew that any of you were coming there only to eat, I would say, stay at home and worship your stomach at home; but if there are those here who would love to come to learn to know each other, and love to take part in singing a hymn of praise to God, who love to listen to a prayer or two, and who love to bring a gift – a free will gift, and expect nothing for it – that is God's plan. That is right and everybody knows it. Amen.

Prayer

O God, our heavenly Father, we ask Thy divine blessing to rest upon all the organizations of this great church of Thine. We pray Thee, O Father in heaven, to give wisdom from on high, not only to the present pastor of this church, but to every pastor who shall ever be called here. O Lord our God, do Thou help that every soul in this house may be thoroughly convinced of the truth of Thy Word and its position on this great question. We pray Thee, our Father in heaven, that Thou wilt give a special blessing to the Missionary Society, to the Earnest Workers Society, to the Sunday School and to the Home Department, and to all the young people in their work, and to every department that is trying to extend Thy kingdom here on earth. And now we pray Thee that Thou wilt put it into the hearts of all these people to bring a free will offering even as the people did in the days of Moses when they built the tabernacle, until Moses had to say, Stop bringing; you are bringing too much. O Father in heaven, these dear women have been working hard all the days of their lives, and especially in this church, for the upbuilding of this Thy temple, and now we pray Thee, O God, that Thou wilt bless them on Wednesday evening when they come together for the purpose of carrying out Thy design and Thy holy will. O Father in heaven, do Thou continue to show us the right in every question that may come up, and so lead us that there can be no question at all about those things that we are about to do. O give Thy blessing to those that shall

receive this message outside of this house of God, and to the hand that has made it possible. We ask this in Jesus' name, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Note.

Since this sermon has been preached the suppers have all been banished from this church by the ladies themselves and the congregation has never prospered more in every way than the last year. – S. P. Long, Pastor.

65. The Greatest Reformation.

And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed unto him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them. Acts 16:9, 10.

Sanctify us, O Lord, through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. Amen.

Beloved in Christ:

AS LONG AS THE WORLD STANDS it will be necessary to have reformations. Sin has come into the world, has made man, created holy and in the image of God, an enemy; and even now, since we have become Christians, we are still dwelling in the body, and it is still natural for even Christians to be weak, and go along blind to their highest duty. So I repeat it, as long as the world stands, there will be great necessity for reformation. There have been great reformations all along the line of history. It was a great reformation when the Lord God taught the first parents to offer sacrifice. It was a great reformation in the days of Noah, when for one hundred and twenty years that man of God warned the people and told them to repent. And at last their sins and stubbornness were answered with the great deluge. It was a great reformation in the days of Hezekiah, when the people were worshiping the very brazen serpent that Moses had placed up to heal those that were bitten by serpents, when he broke down the false gods and established the true religion. It was a great reformation in the days of Ahab, when Elijah after spending three years and more with God all alone, came up to the top of Mount Carmel, and in the presence of four hundred and fifty false prophets of one order, and four hundred of another, there called fire down from heaven and established the true religion of God. It was a great reformation in the days of Christ, when John the Baptist's voice was heard along the hills of Judea, and down at the Jordan, when he told those

supposed-to-be leaders of the Church of God that they were vipers, and should return to the true and living God. That was a great reformation in the days of the apostle Paul when he was called over into Europe by the voice that said: Come over into Macedonia and help us! It was a great reformation in the days of Dr. Martin Luther, when he nailed the ninety-five theses on the door of “The Church of All Saints” at Wittenberg. Next Wednesday it will have been three hundred and eighty nine years since the sound of that hammer was heard. And he drove the nails in well that held those theses, that have given liberty and freedom to the nations of the earth. But, my friends, let us not for a moment imagine that the reformations are all past. As the years are becoming more and more progressive toward the end, it is becoming more and more necessary that the Church of God waken up and reform the world. I call your attention this morning, not to the “Great Reformation” as we heard from the mouth of another last Sunday, but to

The Greatest Reformation.

May the Holy Spirit enlighten our hearts and minds today to enjoy the blessings of God’s Word, and the power of the Holy Spirit Himself. You will please notice

- I. The curse it feels.
- II. The course it follows.

I. The Curse It Feels

The Greatest Reformation, of which I speak this evening, feels the curse:

1. Of No Religion

Let us not forget that Satan is still in our midst, and if he can possibly make people believe that they need no religion whatever, he has gained his first victory; and as we look around us in the present day we are compelled to admit that the most of the people have no religion whatever. We have been told by historians that there never was and never will be a nation on earth that has no religion, and I suppose, as far as a nation is concerned, this is

true, but there are people in every nation that have no religion. When a man lives according to the cry and voice of his own lust; when a man has no care whatever whether his family are Christians or not; when a man does not look into the Bible from one end of the week to the other; when a man has no family altar in his home; when a man does not care whether his children are baptized or not; when a man never goes to the Lord's Supper; when a man has all his money to spend for the devil and the world and nothing for the Church of God; when a man scoffs at everything that is good and holy, and lives like an ox, eats like an ox and sleeps like an ox, and dies like an ox, pray tell me, where is his religion? In this enlightened age, when the printing press is sending forth its message day and night, there is no excuse for any man not to have religion; and consequently, if there ever was a time in the world when we ought to feel the awful curse of no religion, it is now.

2. Of Idolatry

But even Satan with all his power, cannot persuade some Satanic people that they should have no religion. When, therefore, a man stops and thinks just a few moments, and begins to say. Where there is a thing made there is a Maker, and where there is a creature there is a Creator, and I am made a little different than the lower animals; I am not an ox; I am not an irrational animal, I must worship something; then Satan comes to him and says. You are right. You are right. You ought to worship something; but, notice well, if you want to be a happy man in this world, you have got to be a man of perfect freedom; if you want to follow the voice of lust you want to follow it; if you feel like getting drunk, you want to get drunk; if you want to cheat and get along better, then cheat. Now, I will make a suggestion to you. You ought to have a god, but be sure that you have got a god that has no eyes to see and no ears to hear, and no mind to think, and take those gods and set them up in your home on the mantle, and if they are made of gold, put them in the bank and lock them up, and then when you leave home, and leave your bank account, you can go out into the world and live the same damnable life that you lived before, and your gods don't hear it, your gods don't see it, and you can live right on in this world. This world today is crowded with hundreds and thousands of men and women who do not want to live right, and who are obeying the voice of Satan, too religious for no religion, but give us an unknown god – Idolatry.

3. Of Reason

But some men are entirely too bright and too conscientious to worship a god with no eyes to see and no ears to hear and no mind to think, so they say, We want to belong to church; we want the Bible in our homes, and we want to be classified as Christians. If the devil knows he cannot get those ideas out of their heads, he will say: You are right. You are right. But I will tell you what you must not forget. You must not forget that you have got a head of your own; and you must not forget that anything that is contrary to your reason is wrong, and anything that is above your reason cannot be right. And so he tells a half truth – the most dangerous truth in the world – and the falsehood of the devil in this lies in these words, that whatever is above your reason cannot be true. Then he says to this one: Now, go and read this Bible, and hear it. It tells you that God made light with His Word. That is above your reason; that cannot be truth. It tells you that a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call His name Emmanuel. That is above reason; that cannot be truth. Here and there you read that those that were dead were raised from their graves. That is above reason; that cannot be true. Here it teaches you that there is only one God, and yet there are three persons; the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; three persons, only one God; each person God. That is above reason. That cannot be true. And thus he goes on. Here you will find a certain verse in the Bible that must be God's Word, but here are others that cannot be. And the first thing you know, he has got a certain class of professed Christians in the world that will not accept a truth here, and a truth there entirely.

When those same people come to Satan and say. Which Word is true? he says, I will tell you that in your dying hour. Do not accept the whole Bible. And then in his dying hour, when that man feels the weight of his sins, and feels the curse of God resting on him, he finally tries to find his comfort in these words which he knows must be true: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin," and then the devil whispers in his ear in the last moment. That is one of the verses that is not God's Word. That is above reason; that is not true. And without any faith in God, that man leaps into eternity, – lost forever! He had a religion; he belonged to church; but he is one of the thousands that are clinging to false doctrines. And in this age of enlightenment, in this age of intelligence, there is no reason for any man not

knowing what God's Word does teach concerning Holy Baptism, concerning the Lord's Supper, concerning the Office of the Keys, and all the vital, saving doctrines of the Word. And if there ever was a time when there was a need – a great need – of the greatest reformation, it is now.

4. A Worldly Church

Not only is it true that some people will cling to false doctrines, but it is also true that many people want to be in a worldly church. What made the Church of Rome so corrupt? It was the fact that they did not cling to the truth which Paul taught them when he went over to Macedonia. Paul was the first missionary that entered Europe. The first woman that was converted opened the door for the Gospel to enter that great country, and finally to us. In those days they all knew the truth concerning justification by faith. They heard from the apostle Paul the great Lutheran doctrine, and the great apostolic doctrine of the Lord's Supper. They heard in those days the wonderful doctrine from Paul, of regeneration by water and the Spirit. They heard in those days the truth concerning all the vital doctrines of the Church of God. But in those days the Church of God grew worldly. The Church of God said: We have got to win the powers of Egypt and Europe. If we give in a little on this point, and a little on that point, we shall soon have the whole world in the church. And then, when they laid the foundation for St. Peter's, and they could not raise enough money, it was suggested that they should sell the forgiveness of sins to people. Oh, the world said, That is what we want. I am willing to pay for it if I can sin. I am willing to pay big sums if I can have forgiveness and peace of conscience. And then they sent out Mr. Tetzl to sell forgiveness of sins to the people – so many sins for a goose; so many sins for a duck; so many sins for a pound of butter; so many sins for a dollar; and if people have died in their sins pray them out of purgatory for so many dollars; bringing in Paganism and uniting it with the Church, and instead of the Church reforming the world, the world deformed the Church. And in the days of Luther few found peace in justification; few had the Bible; the Word of God was in the dark, hidden away, tied with chains; in those days no man had books or magazines to read; men were considered powerful for the church if kept in ignorance and darkness; no public schools. Then priests began to take the Pagan religion and mixed it with the Christian religion until the Church of God was lost in darkness.

Oh, my dear friends, we are, to a certain extent, feeling the curse today of the worldly church. I will refer you in a few moments to what Dr. Luther did to bring the church out in her purity in those great days of God in the sixteenth century. But let us beware that we do not bring the church back to the world again.

A great man has recently said that today the church is worldly, and the world is churchly. That is just exactly what happened in the Middle Ages. There are few people today in the church that want to be downright Christians. There are few people today in the church of God that are setting an example that helps me, and you parents to raise your children rightly. When our boys go into dark hell-holes of saloons they find church members at the bar. When our girls sneak up to Hawkins' dancing hall, they find good church members sitting around there, with their daughters on the dancing floor. I am here to make the statement this evening, and I need not recall it, that there is not a work so low, or so mean, or so damnable, in the city of Mansfield, that you cannot find some church members to defend it. If there ever was a time, with all the enlightenment of the present century, that we needed the greatest reformation, it is now. I will tell you right here that if the professed Christians of my church were all consistent, we would move Mansfield. But just as long as you try to be one thing on Sunday, and something else through the week; just as long as you will stand in the prayer meeting one evening, and on the dancing floor the next; just as long as you are as worldly as the most worldly man can be, you are making the world churchly, and the church worldly, and somebody ought to feel the awful curse.

5. The Inactivity of the Christian

There is another thing that we should feel in the present day, if we want the greatest reformation, and that is the inactivity of the Christian. If Adam were living in the world today, he would have learned more of the material progress of this world in the last seventy-five years, than he learned in all the balance of his life. On the 31st day of October, 1517, when Dr. Luther nailed the ninety-five theses on the door of the Wittenberg church, the printing press and the discovery of paper made of rags, were all in the hands of God to be discovered at the same time, to unite, for the great freedom and the great liberty which you today enjoy. On that morning, three hundred

and eighty-nine years ago, there was no steam railroad; no telegraph wire; no telephone message; no electric light. Those were the end of the great Middle Ages, the beginning of the great era of progress; and as the world is moving on in time, the material progress is increasing – and what about the church? The Church of God is not keeping pace. The Church of God is not trying to make the progress that the material world is, and consequently we are feeling today the curse of an inactivity on the part of those who still hold to the true faith.

It does seem to me that if these things are true which we confess in the Apostles' Creed, then every Christian ought to live, and give, and pray, for the salvation of the world. How the Christian Church of today can hold its billions of God's gold and refuse to send the young men, who are ready to say, Here am I; send me, as Paul went to Macedonia – I say, how all these men can hold back their gold and profess to love God, is something that I cannot understand. Let the Christian Church of today waken up. Let her feel her responsibility for the salvation of every lost man, woman, and child. This, my friends, is the curse that the greatest reformation feels.

II. The Course It Follows

Now let us notice the course it follows:

1. Begins With The Word

Every reformation began with the Word of God. In the days of Noah it was the message of God that sent him out to declare that He would have patience for one hundred and twenty years yet. In the days of Elijah it was the Word of God that had to settle the matter on Mount Carmel. In the days of John the Baptist it was the Word of God that he proclaimed along the Jordan. In the days of the apostle Paul it was the voice of God that said. Come over into Macedonia and help us. In the days of Dr. Luther it was the Word of God that started the Reformation. In those days all that the people knew of the Word of God was what you find indicated in your hymnbook – the Gospel and Epistolary lessons for the church year. Luther at the age of eighteen, straying through the library at Erfurt, never dreamed there was such a thing as a Bible, and when he found the chain and followed it to the

old Book, and pulled it down, and saw written on it, *Biblia Sacra*, he had no idea there was anything within those lids except these Gospel lessons and the epistolary lessons. When he opened that Book, had it opened at a page where a Gospel lesson was found, he might have closed it up and never read it, and there would be no Reformation yet. It was not an accident, it was the finger of God, that opened that Book at the story of Hannah and her little boy, Samuel, and the young student of Erfurt never knew that there was such a thing in the Bible, and his curiosity was aroused; he laid the Book down, and by the candle light read it day and night, and he came to the great truth: The just shall live by his faith! A new light dawned upon his soul. He compared the teaching of that *Biblia Sacra* – the Holy Bible – with the teachings of Rome, and he said, If this be true, the teachings of Rome are false. And yet he wanted peace. He was an honest young man. He sought for the truth. It is hard to get rid of what you learn when you are a little child. And so, in order to settle the question, he went down to Rome. He was told that if he would take excursions, and climb up the stairway of Pilate on his knees, he would get the forgiveness of sins; and while climbing up that stairway on his knees, there flashed into his mind that verse of the Bible: The just shall live by his faith! And he said, This is nonsense. I don't get forgiveness of sins by climbing around on my knees, nor by my own good works. I will go home, and I will shake Rome! There was kindled in his heart that day the certain truth of not only the Lutheran Church, but of every Protestant Church that shall stand. For any church that is not in the clear on the doctrine of justification by faith, can never stand. And so he said, I am going to teach God's Word. Rome says that we shall worship the saints, but I found in the Bible, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Rome said. The common people are not to have the Bible; but the Word of God says: "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me." And so, the first opportunity he had, he made the old Greek and Hebrew Bible talk German, and those German leaves, like angels' wings, flew all over Europe, and the people read the Word of God.

Rome taught that the laymen did not need the blood in the Lord's Supper; but Luther found that the Bible said: "Drink ye all of it." Rome says that we are saved by our own good works, and by our crusades, and by our own efforts, but the Bible says: "Wherefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." And so the great

Reformation of the sixteenth century was begun with the Word of God as the only rule and form for salvation.

And so it has got to be in the greatest Reformation. We have got to get away from our public libraries, ninety per cent of which is not fit to read; away from our Sunday newspapers; away from much of the trash that is lying around in our homes, and put the Bible forward again, and the good Word of God, and the catechism; drill your children in the fundamental truths of God's Word, if you ever want to have the right kind of a reformation.

2. Begins With One Man

Then I would call your attention to this, that the course of this greatest reformation is to waken up a man. Whenever God wanted to do any great work, He always began with one man. He began that wonderful reformation of the flood, with Noah. He began to convert the people of the old country in the days of Elijah, by waking up one man. He began the great era of Christ on earth, in His ministry, by waking up John the Baptist. He began the great Reformation of the sixteenth century by going down to a miner's son, a boy that sang on the streets for bread, and woke him up to see the truth. And thus the great reformation, and the greatest reformations are based on the same foundation, the Word of God, discovered by a man.

3. Friends Awakened For The Man

The third step in this course is the wakening up friends for the man. Noah was not alone. His three sons stood by him. Elijah thought he was all alone, but God said to him, Elijah, there are seven thousand in Israel that have never bent their knees before Baal. John the Baptist is not alone. Christ calls His disciples; wakens up a Paul, who is to open the door through Macedonia to Europe. Dr. Luther was not alone. Kings on their thrones. Emperors, Electors, Dukes, well bred men, suffering Europe, all cried in their misery: O God, send us a man to help us out of this bondage! And it was not long until these mighty men of the church and state said, Luther, we will stand by you. Go on!

And thus it will be in the greatest reformation. Combining the great men of the past with the great men of the future, God will raise up men. As in

politics, so in the church. The Christian people all over this land are feeling the necessity of fearless men of God who will tell us the truth. I tell you, my friends, that churches as a rule are to be pitied for the pulpit cowards that we have in the present day. There is a strong cry in the heart of every man, no difference if his head and his tongue rebel against it – I must have the truth! We need not fear the rattling tongues of men. We need not fear the minds that are controlled by lust. The appeal in the greatest reformation must be made to conscience and to the best thoughts of the heart.

4. Moves Westward

You will notice, furthermore, that this greatest reformation in its course goes westward. Bishop Berkley sang long ago:

“Westward the course of empire takes its way –
The first four acts already past;
A fifth shall close the drama with the day.
Time’s noblest offspring is the last.”

The first four acts of the world’s history are past. We are living in the last great act, and the last great act will bring about the conclusion of the greatest reformation. Progress has always been, according to God’s own order, from east to west. It is true a Daniel went east, but he went there a captive and told the story of the Star of Jacob. The people took the treasure, held to it, and when Christ was born in Bethlehem, the wise men from the east went west, and found Christ. The Lord God called Paul to be a missionary to the heathen. He called him from Troas to Macedonia. Paul, go west! When Horace Greeley said, “Young man, go west,” he was speaking in perfect harmony with Providence. Why is it that western nations are always a greater power than those of the east? What were our fathers and mothers? They were the brawn and brain of Europe; they said. We are ready to leave home. They were the progressive people of Europe who came over here and became our fathers and mothers. Who are the young men and young women today of our own western country? They are the boys and the girls, that when you said, “Stay at home,” said “No!” We are going west.” And the further west you go, the more progress you find, because the lazy people stayed at home.

Now, my friends, this isn't accidental. It is God's plan. The Gospel entered Europe at Macedonia; worked its way through Europe, and God saw to it that the printing press, paper made of rags, and the discovery of America, were in the same century – saw to it that there should be a great land in the west where the persecuted of Europe shall go in the days of the Reformation and escape the fires of natural flames, and kindle a flame from heaven in the great land of America. It is not an accident that the great canal across the Isthmus is being built now. It is going to make the Pacific the center of the world. It is going to open up the Gospel path around to China and all the islands. In other words, my friends, you will never understand God's Providence and the course of the greatest reformation, until you find out that as the sun rises in the east, and goes to the west, so the Gospel of Christ must come to Macedonia; from Macedonia through Europe; from Europe through America; from America through the islands of the sea; and the only way to convert the far east is to come around from the west. And when Christ said that the end will not come until the Gospel shall be preached to the ends of the world. He meant that it must come back from whence it started, and then the end shall come. We are living today in the last great act of the greatest drama of God.

5. It Will End With Judgment Day

And when will this greatest reformation be finished? It will end with the Judgment Day. I am trying this morning to lead you into a wider vision than simply the Reformation of the sixteenth century. I am trying to give you a vision this morning that reaches from the Garden of Eden to the end of the world. Remember, my friends, that great battles are yet to be fought. As we are nearing the end of the world, Satan is raging more and more. Everything will be done in the next few centuries to come to damn the world, that hell can possibly devise. On the other hand, God's people must waken up. Righteousness shall prevail. The battle is coming on. It will not be long until there will be such an act as there never was before. It will not be long until the waves of the great flood in the days of Noah; until the fires that fell from heaven in the days of Elijah; until the mighty power that John the Baptist wielded in the days of Christ; until the flames that burned the one hundred and eighty-five millions of martyrs in the first three centuries; until the great Reformation of the sixteenth century illuminating the Dark and

Middle Ages; until all the darkness and the light combined today, with its battles upon land and sea; until all these things shall be but little scenes in the great acts that preceded the act of all acts, when God Almighty shall summon His angels, and the Son of God shall command the heavens to roll back like a scroll, the stars of heaven to fall, the dead to rise; the last assize; when all that was ever wrong shall be known, and all that was ever right shall be seen; when the just shall be separated from the unjust; the righteous from the unrighteous; the holy from the unholy; when heaven shall be heaven complete, and hell prepared for the devil and his angels, as hellish as it can ever be, then will come the end of the greatest reformation, when God shall repeat what He said in His Word to John: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. Amen.

Prayer

O God of ages, eternal in the heavens, before whom angels bow and the elders cast their crowns, we come to Thee this day, thanking Thee that we are enjoying the benefits of all the reformations of the past, and have in our hands and in our hearts the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, to do our part in the great drama of the greatest reformation. We pray Thee, Father in heaven. Thou who didst let the Gospel into Europe by way of Macedonia, with the first conversion of a woman, do Thou bless the women of our church and country, and help that they may do more for the spreading of Thy kingdom. We pray Thee to bless all our missionary societies; help them to kindle a flame in the hearts of all people to spread the Gospel of Christ to the ends of the earth. Oh, do Thou give to the Church of God, mighty men of God, like Luther, arid Paul, and John the Baptist, and Elijah, and Hezekiah, who shall do all that they possibly can to break down the idols and to establish the true worship of the true and living God.

We thank Thee for all our schools and churches, and we pray to Thee that Thou wilt give us teachers who love Thy Word and the Bride for whom Thou hast laid down Thy life, O Christ! We pray Thee that Thou wilt help us to appreciate Thy Hand, which moves day and night for the salvation of the world. O Lord God, when our voices are silent, and our children are no

more on earth, help that childrens' children may be wakened up to perform their duties well for the glory of Thy Church and the honor of Thy name. Hear this prayer; we ask it in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

About Simon Peter Long (1860-1929)

Simon Peter Long (1860-1929) studied at Capital University and the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary in Columbus and at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. He was a student of Matthias Loy.

Rev. Long served as a pastor from 1886 to 1929, as President of Lima College from 1898-1903, and as Professor and President in the Chicago Lutheran Bible School. His sermons are among the treasures of the Church.

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The most important thing to grasp is that no one is made right with God by the good things he or she might do. Justification is by faith only, and that faith resting on what Jesus Christ did. It is by believing and trusting in His one-time *substitutionary* death for your sins.

Read your Bible steadily. God works His power in human beings through His Word. Where the Word is, God the Holy Spirit is always present.

Suggested Reading: [New Testament Conversions](#) by Pastor George Gerberding

Benediction

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 1:24-25)

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