

Robert Emory Golladay

**Our Festivals in
Church and State**



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Our Festivals in Church and State

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OHIO; AUTHOR OF LENTEN OUTLINES AND SERMONS,
THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, THE APOSTLES' CREED,
THE LORD'S PRAYER

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To my wife, my companion
for thirty years; through whose
solicitude and helpfulness more
work of this kind has been made
possible, this volume is lovingly
dedicated.

BY THE AUTHOR.

May the Great Head of the Church,
for the advancement of whose Kingdom
these sermons were prepared and
preached, bless the reader through
reading of the same.

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The Church

Advent. The Patriarch Priest's Advent Psalm.

And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying,

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
For he hath visited and wrought redemption for his people,
And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us
In the house of his servant David
(As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from
of old),
Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;
To show mercy towards our fathers,
And to remember his holy covenant;
The oath which he sware unto Abraham our father,
To grant unto us that we being delivered out of the hand of our
enemies
Should serve him without fear,
In holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
Yea and thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High:
For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready his
ways;
To give knowledge of salvation unto his people
In the remission of their sins,
Because of the tender mercy of our God,
Whereby the dayspring from on high shall visit us,
To shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death;
To guide our feet into the way of peace.

LUKE 1:67-79.

WONDERFUL THINGS were taking place in Israel nineteen hundred years ago. For four hundred years there had been no special voice from Heaven. Now the Heavens were astir. God's age-long plan for man's salvation was ripening fast. The fulness of time had come. The clock of history, that tells the passing of the centuries, was getting ready to strike the high noon of all the ages of human existence.

There was to be a marriage of Heaven and earth. Angel visitors were coming down from the courts of glory with strange messages for the sons of men. The angel Gabriel, one of the most powerful and glorious of the higher orders of Heaven's ministering spirits, had come with a message for Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth. These people were old and God-fearing. Religion was not a form with them. They were heart-hungry. The old promises of God had a meaning for them. They were waiting, longing, praying for the coming of the Messiah. God's angel had come to tell these godly old folk that they were to have a part, a living part, in the final unfolding of God's plans for man's salvation.

In another part of the country, this same angel Gabriel later came down to one of Israel's modest, virtuous maidens with the most stupendous message, the most blessed message, that the mind of God had ever conceived, or the ear of mortal heard. It was a message about a new order of being, -a God-man, a son of the Highest, born of a virgin; who was to bring down Heaven's grace and power to cure earth's ills.

At the time of which our text speaks, the first of these promises had been fulfilled. Aged Elizabeth had borne a son. It was on the eighth day, and their neighbors and friends had assembled for the joyous service of circumcision, wherein the child was dedicated to God, and had laid upon it all the duties, and privileges, and honor which such relationship brought. In the midst of this service, the speechlessness, and deafness, which had been laid on Zacharias as a sign and seal of the faithfulness of God, was removed; and he broke out in a song of thanksgiving and praise. This song is what we are going to consider this morning. We shall cull it The Patriarch Priest's Advent Psalm.

I.

I want you to note, it is worth noting, that the Gospel age was ushered in with Heavenly harmonies. Heaven and earth both became vocal with praise.

St. Luke, in addition to being a physician, was, according to a general tradition, a painter as well. We know, from what he has given us, that he was a wonderful painter of words. He had the soul of a poet. Above all others he caught the meaning, and the fitness, of these heaven-born melodies.

In those days when a new world was dawning, there were poems in action, as well as in words. I wish that we would all remember that, though we may not be able to write poetry, the life of each one of us may be a poem. Angels, with messages pregnant with world meaning, were winging their way back and forth from Heaven to earth. Zacharias and Elizabeth, with a message that was burning its way into their deepest soul-consciousness, go into retirement to meditate, to dream, to pray; to get themselves into still greater readiness for the part they were to play in the ushering in of this new age. Mary, up at distant Nazareth, has her soul all aglow at the glimpse she had gotten of the truth of Gabriel's message; and her very body becomes vibrant with joy at the consciousness of the honor God had bestowed on her. In the exuberance of her joy, she makes a hurried trip to the unnamed Judean town where Zacharias and Elizabeth live. When Mary arrives, and, unannounced, enters their home, Elizabeth breaks out into an inspired hymn of praise. When she has finished, Mary breaks out into a still loftier hymn, beginning with the well known words: "My soul doth magnify the Lord." Three months pass, and he whom we know as John the Baptist was born. Zacharias, his father, gave utterance to the Psalm we have as our text. Six months more pass, and the Heavens are teeming with angelic choruses, the burden of whose song is: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." A few weeks later, and we hear the aged Simeon singing his swan song: "Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation."

Was this all an accident? these hallelujah choruses, these responsive anthems, sung by massed choirs of angels in the sky, and the choicest spirits of all the sons and daughters of earth? Not at all. It was purest design. It was of the very nature of things. It was to show the nature of salvation. It was sin that brought tears, and the cry of pain and distress to earth. The religion of Jesus Christ is to cure all this. The religion of Jesus is to restore

the world's lost harmonies; it is to again teach the world how to sing. I want to express it as my judgment that if we have never learned to sing, I do not mean with our lips, some of us are not very musical that way, but with our hearts, then it is seriously to be questioned whether we know anything about God, about Jesus our friend, about forgiveness; whether we have ever had any real religion in our souls. God's great purpose is to put a song into the hearts of his people, a song that nothing can silence.

II.

The first thing that we notice in this Psalm which Zacharias sings is that he is reminded, and fully convinced, that God, his God, Israel's God, the world's God, is a faith-keeping God.

Before there can ever be much of a sustained song in the heart, a song that can endure the night, and the dungeon, and all the pains and griefs of life, one must have the settled assurance that our God is a faith-keeping God, that when He makes promises He fulfills them.

In the days of which our text speaks, there were not very many in Israel who were singing. I mean singing with their hearts, singing because of a real joy in their hearts caused by a confirmed sense of eternal well-being. You know there are people who sing just to drown the grief that is gnawing at their hearts. Most of the jazz, and kindred stuff, in the world, is just one of the devil's many inventions to keep people from thinking. At the same time it serves, under the form of an erotic stimulus, as a means of administering a narcotic to deaden the cry of the soul.

In spite of the generally prevailing spiritual superficiality and deadness in Israel, which had killed all real music of the heart, there were those whose lives were keenly attuned to the life of God. All these were fervently praying, and anxiously waiting, for the fulfillment of the promises made of old. And of all the promises made of old, the living heart was the promise of a Messiah, a deliverer, a Savior.

I judge that with the best of these devout Israelites, there were times when they wondered why the delay. Just think, at the very beginning, right on the heels of that great catastrophe in human life, in the garden the promise was made that the strangle hold of evil on human life should be broken. Then millenniums passed, and so far as we know, very little was

said or done about it, while human life went on its perplexed way, like children little knowing whither they went, or why they're going. Then came the time of the patriarchs, with covenanted renewals of the promise. Then centuries of oppression. Then other centuries of crude early national development. Then a rather glorious expansion and development of national life under David. Then vicissitudes and decline.

Why all this delay? Why all this suspense? Why all these hopes deferred, which make the heart sick? God, no doubt, could have fulfilled His promises anytime. Heaven was ready, but earth was not. It took centuries, it took millenniums, of training to get the world in some measure of readiness for Heaven's supreme blessing. God saw this first moment of readiness. It was unalterably fixed. The cry of Israel's impatient hopes were never allowed to hurry forward God's plans by one fraction of a moment. But the moment that the fulness of time came, and man was ready, God was there, and His promises were fulfilled to the letter.

Now, when Zacharias sees the beginning of the immediate fulfillment of this supreme promise of God, the pledge of the fulfillment of all His other promises, he breaks out in his song of praise: "Blessed be God." One of the first things of which he thinks is this — Our God is a faithful God. He can be trusted. He made a solemn covenant with our father Abraham, and he is now redeeming it. He repeated these promises to the Prophets. Every one of these promises is now being made good. Thus the cup of joy in the soul of Zacharias was filled.

A faith-keeping God! Oh, that we might learn this truth as we should; a lesson that is taught by every page of history that has ever been written down through the ages. A God who keeps faith with nations, and with individuals, yes, the meekest and most lowly.

God, for reasons well known to Himself, and wholly justifiable, may delay; but He never fails. In reality, there is no delay with God. He never puts off anything till tomorrow. There is nothing can stay God's hand, as there is nothing can force His hand. He has His time, the right time, the absolutely best time, for everything. When that time comes things are done. Let us possess our souls in patience, and keep a song in our hearts; for God is going to prove Himself, in our experience also, a faith-keeping God. We

can put ourselves in His care and rest content. Time will justify God's action.

III.

Zacharias casts his glance admiringly, lovingly, trustingly down the backward stretching road of history, where it was now to be seen God had ever been true to Himself, and true to His children. But the burden of his Psalm is of present blessings.

The exciting cause of Zacharias' Psalm of praise was, of course, the birth of their son, whom the world came to know as John the Baptist. There would have been joy in this household if this child had not been the child he was. There would have been the ancient oriental joy in the consciousness of fatherhood and motherhood. But the highest and holiest joy of these people did not have its root in mere natural affection, strong and holy as that was. The holy flame of joy which filled their hearts, and overflowed in Zacharias' Psalm of praise, had its roots, first of all, in the consciousness they had of the part this child was to play in the fulfillment of God's promises, and the unfolding of the Kingdom of God. We can see this in the words of Zacharias. He says of this boy of his: "Thou shalt be called the prophet of the Most High. Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready His ways." This was honor enough. This an all-sufficient fount of joy.

I commend this thought to you, young people. I commend this thought to you, fathers and mothers. Do you wish to distinguish yourselves, young people? Do you wish your children to distinguish themselves, fathers and mothers? How? In a world that is heartsore, and needs comfort, in a world that is blind and needs to be led, in a world that is lost and needs to be saved, is there anything sweeter, anything more eternally worthwhile than just to be a voice by the roadside pointing people to Jesus Christ who is the world's light and life, and the world's only way to peace? No doubt, if there were more fathers and mothers like Zacharias and Elizabeth, there would be more sons like John, more daughters like the Marys of Gospel story.

It will come to the mind of the thinking reader that at the time Zacharias spoke these words the Christ was not yet even born. But he speaks of it as an accomplished fact. The secret of this is the confidence Zacharias had in

the near completion of God's plans. He had just been talking with God through God's angels. The angel's promise in his own case had just been fulfilled. He knew the intimate story of the Virgin from Nazareth. He is simply speaking as one who knows the ways of God.

The burden of the Psalm of Zacharias, as he thinks of the troubles and needs and longings of Israel, in connection with the events now transpiring, is salvation.

How much Zacharias may have thought of national deliverance, and of social salvation, I have no way of knowing. That the color of his thinking, and the terminology of his language, should be affected by the condition of his people's temporal affairs, seems to me altogether natural and probable. They were an oppressed and harassed people. The condition of their little country itself, much of it rough and mountainous, and bounded, I should say, on three-fourths of its border by the parched and threatening desert, made life rather precarious for many of its people.

That Zacharias is not thinking chiefly of these things he clearly shows. The redemption which he sees at hand is from sin. It is a redemption that is obtained by the laying down of a price, such as only Jesus Christ has ever paid for mankind. It was to be a deliverance which would take them out of the darkness where men sit in the shadow, and the fear, of death. However simple his ideas may have been on the subject, Zacharias saw in the coming Messiah a real Savior, who was bringing a salvation that reached down to the depths of the human soul, and brought deliverance there by the forgiveness of sin. He saw, and rightly saw, what many today refuse to see, that the one great enemy that needs to be vanquished, and destroyed, is sin.

The ills of the earth are hidden today behind all kinds of philosophic names, and scientific terminology. But let us sit down and calmly reason together. Take our own city and state life, what are the things that make thinking people uneasy? What is it that outrages our sense of justice? What is it that makes us fear for the future? Is it not the moral cussedness which abounds? When we look at our broader national life, what is it that makes us sometimes despair of popular government? What is it that makes us fear for our institutions, including the home? What is it but a flabby, and diminishing, moral consciousness? When we think of international affairs, when we think of national selfishness; when we think of how strong nations

exploit the weak; when we think of how practically every nation, on occasion, plots against every other nation; to what shall we attribute all this? It is plain unadulterated moral perversion; it is pride and selfishness, which, for self-justification, stalks under the fine names of loyalty and patriotism. From beginning to end, all these things must be reduced to the class at the head of which stands that ugly but expressive little word -sin. For sin there is but one cure, — Jesus Christ. He is the only one through whom sin can be forgiven. He is the only one who can help us to overcome sin. Men are never going to live together as brothers until they have a new heart, and a new mind; the mind and heart of Jesus. Then, whatever men want to call it in scientific language, we will have converted men.

Some people are inclined to stand aloof from Christianity, because they have gotten the idea that it is something foisted onto the world from without, that it is alien to the natural life of man. The truth of the matter is that the religion of Jesus Christ is the most natural, the sanest, the most orderly thing that this world knows. Christianity is just God's attempt to bring people back to normal. Candidly, do not the deepest yearnings, and the best promptings, of every human heart tell us that this is true?

Then let us join in the Psalm of the aged Zacharias: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; for He hath visited and wrought redemption for His people. And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David."

IV.

Zacharias casts his glance backward, and, in spite of Israel's checkered history, is assured that God is a faith-keeping God; he looks out into the active present, and is assured that the world is big with blessings for all who will accept them, for, in sky and earth, he sees God busily, lovingly, mightily at work for man's salvation; and then, as the eyes of Zacharias fall on the far stretching road of the future, he is comforted and cheered, for he is assured, by all the experiences of history, that God can be trusted to go with His people all the way.

These closing weeks of the year are thought-provoking weeks. This is Advent Sunday, the beginning of a new church-year. In a few weeks we will have Christmas. In five weeks another civil year will be knocking at the

door. All these events remind us .of the flight of time. As the months and years keep flying by, they keep whispering, whether we want to hear it or not: You are getting older, you are getting older. This, and other things, compel us to think of the future.

Now let us be perfectly frank and honest, each with himself. We may not have any particular difficulties as we look into the coming year from a business point of view. We may have been foresighted, and far-sighted. Everything may give promise of breaking right for us in our temporal affairs. Even if we are not so fortunate in this respect, if we have a strong arm, a stout heart, and a clear head, we may feel that we are still capable of making our way; that what men have done, men can do. But this is not all. We know that contingencies arise in human affairs over which we have no control. This is not all. And this is not the chief thing. Circumstances combine to compel us at times, whether we want to do so or not, to think of that long, long road, which never turns, and never comes back. Can we think of that calmly and unafraid? We may refuse to think. We may cast it aside, and affirm that we are going to let coming events take care of themselves. To some little extent we may be able to do this, but not entirely. Even if we could, is it wise to do so?

Let us meet this situation like wise people, like courageous people. Can we face the long look calmly, unafraid? Can we see anything along the way, and at the end of the road, that is encouraging, beautiful, inspiring? There are millions who have. There are millions who do. Now, again, let us be perfectly candid and honest, with ourselves, and the subject we are investigating. Let us keep from being influenced by our past training. Let us look facts in the face full and impartially. Is there anything else in the world that deals as honestly with life as the teaching of Jesus Christ? Is there anything that shows up the ills of life, and proves that it is doing it aright by the hurt that is given when the sore spot is touched, as does the religion of Jesus Christ? Is there anything in all the world that paints life as beautiful as the religion of .Jesus Christ shows that human life may become? Is there anything, point it out if you know of it, we want the truth, is there anything in all the world that can give to the sons of men, under the stress of the most trying circumstances, the courage, the strength, the comfort, the peace, and the joy, which the religion of Jesus Christ, not only promises, but actually has given, find now gives, to countless multitudes of the sons of men? Is

there, in all the world, a philosophic, moral, or religious teacher, whether he has departed from the earth two thousand years ago, or a hundred years ago, who makes his presence actually felt, his companionship such a reality, who so vitally imparts his help, as Jesus Christ? Is there anything in all the world, in all its history, that has made life as beautiful as many lives actually have become under the tutelage, and in the companionship, of Jesus Christ?

Why do we need to philosophize so much? Why do we need, or think we need, to reduce everything in the spiritual universe to the standards and measurements in use in the material world? Verification is possible, but it must be verification in the realm of the spiritual. Experience is the last word in spiritual verification. "O taste and see that Jehovah is good" is the divine invitation.

When men have done this like Zacharias and Elizabeth, like Mary and the Johns, like Paul and Augustine and Luther, they will not be afraid of the long road and the long look. They will not look at life in little sections, but in its totality; they will begin to understand that the pains and ills of life bear the same relation to the development of the spirit that growing pains in the child bear to the development of the body. They will understand that all normal human life, which only is Christian life, is moving on, aided by every possible experience, to final completion, perfect beauty, and eternal harmony; in a world of perfect beauty, and eternal harmony. That the great artificer in the individual, and the world process, is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Son of man.

If this is not the lesson of all history, and of history in the making, then reject it. If it is true then, if we are not fools, or madmen, we should accept it; and our lives should be ordered according to it. We should join, with the patriarchs of old, in their Advent Psalms: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, the old Israel and the new; for He hath visited and redeemed His people." Let us face the tasks of today with courage. God expects every son of His to do his duty. Let us face the long, long trail unafraid. The Lord of hosts is with us. More, much more, Jesus Christ, the God-man, has gone over the road, every part of it. He knows all its dangers and trials. He knows our needs. He is our faithful guide, and our unfailing helper. This is the message of Advent for the struggling, suffering, sorrowing, but ever hoping sons of men. Amen.

Christmas. The Babe Of Bethlehem.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

But when he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for it is he that shall have his people from their sins.

Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying,

Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son,

And they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being Interpreted, God with us."

MATTHEW 1:18-23.

THIS IS CHRISTMAS MORNING. All around this earth Christmas greetings are being exchanged. In multiplied thousands of sanctuaries Christmas sermons are being preached, and Christmas anthems are being

sung. In spite of the world's thoughtlessness, and godlessness, actually millions of men and women and children are bowing their heads in reverence; there is a holy joy in their hearts which brings a mist to their eyes akin to tears. It seems to me that, in the cloistered arcade of the temple of high Heaven, I can see, amid a group of congenial fellow-spirits, the great angel Gabriel re-telling, with evidences of holy delight, of those adventurous journeys he made to earth, some two thousand years ago, to bear to mortals the first Heaven-born news of a Christmas near at hand. Christmas is kept not only on earth. Christmas is kept in Heaven. I think it always will be.

What is it all about? this event that shakes the two poles of existence, earth and heaven? It must be something of vast importance. It is, indeed. A little baby is born. A little baby is born, wrapped in cast off garments, and laid in a manger, where lowly oxen are wont to ruminat; but because of this little babe the world can never again be just the same. A little baby is born, and because of it angelic voices fill the blue Syrian sky; and the hearts of men, for all time, catch the music of another melody. A little baby is born of humble parents, and all history is dated anew. A little baby is born, and the universe is shaken, stars act strangely, and planets deviate from their course. A little baby is born in a roadside cave, and the aspect of the whole world is changed, its center of gravity is shifted, and the drift of the ages is altered.

This story is not new . It has been told, annually, nineteen hundred and twenty-eight times. But neither is this story old. It is new with the perennial interest of all those things wherein mortals are involved which bear the marks of the eternities. So let us reverently, openmindedly, prayerfully again approach the Christmas manger and consider: The Babe of Bethlehem.

I.

The Babe of Bethlehem. Who and what is this babe? It is a real human child.

In all the ages there have been but few who have questioned the reality of the human nature of this babe. To the unenlightened human mind the

Babe of Bethlehem is just what Joseph, at first, thought it was going to be, not merely a human child, but a child of reproach.

Joseph, an upright, noble hearted craftsman of Nazareth, in the hill country of Galilee, was engaged to the purest, sweetest, most modest maiden in his native village. Such a betrothal meant, at times at least, that the parties to the covenant did not meet for a year after the betrothal ceremony. This period, antedating the establishment of actual wedded relationship between young people, seems to have been established, in part, at least, as a test of the permanency of affection.

Sometimes during these months of suspense, while Joseph was dreaming dreams of love, and of the delights which were going to be his when their home was established, for which he was constantly planning, and making provision, disturbing facts came to his attention. How they came we are not told. I think they did not come from observation; for the eyes of love are proverbially blind, so far as the beloved is concerned. They probably came from the usual neighborhood gossip; for the eyes of envy and jealousy are proverbially keen, and especially so where purity and modesty seem to have been, temporarily, vulnerable.

These stories struck a barbed dart into the heart of Joseph; for Joseph was a true gentleman. He was pure himself. He worshiped at the shrine of womanly purity. To him this maiden of his choice had been the incarnation of all womanly virtues. These reports were not only about to shatter Joseph's dreams of love and happiness, they robbed him of his sleep, they took the light of hope from his eyes, they took the color of health from his cheeks. At first Joseph resolutely refused to believe these reports. They were the idle stories of a jealous imagination. But the passing days compelled Joseph to change his mind against his will. The cumulative evidence was too great. There was but one thing Joseph could now believe. He had been deceived. A strange thing had happened. The flower of Nazareth had sullied the hitherto white purity of her life. Joseph was wounded as only a sensitive man of honor can be wounded. But he was the high-souled man of honor still. He will make no vulgar outcry. Though sorely wounded, love would not die. And Mary, though, as he now felt, she could never take the place in his life which he had hoped, should be subjected to no ordeal. The bonds which bound them together should be quietly severed. He, Joseph the deceived, and the broken-hearted, would go

his way alone. As for Mary, he could not help her bear the burden which, as he thought, she had brought on herself. He, too, would have his burden but the weight of his crushing burden could not lighten hers.

Such were the thoughts and feelings of Joseph. How could the human mind, not specially enlightened, think otherwise? How could the human heart feel in any other way? This is the way the vulgar, unenlightened mind thinks today. It is earth-bound. It knows not the ways of God. It knows only what we call natural laws. It knows not the One who holds all laws in the hollow of His hands.

One night, as the throbbing temples of Joseph pressed the pillow in troubled sleep, a heavenly visitor was near to whisper a strange, but welcome, message into his mind and heart. It was a message something like this: Joseph, I know the thoughts that have been troubling you. I do not blame you. There is nothing else you could have thought without knowing the eternal mind of God. But, though blameless, your thoughts are wrong. The gleaming snow-drifts on yonder Hermon are not purer than is Mary in this thing whereof thou hast been accusing her. A strange thing has happened. Mary is near to giving birth to a son without human paternity. She is to be the first and only Virgin mother. The Spirit of the living God is working it miracle in and through her. Joseph fear not; be God's man, throw your protecting arms around this spotless woman of your choice, and My choice; link your name with hers as the guardian of God's new creation in the realm of human life.

Let lowbrowed minstrels, and highbrowed unbelief, that has learned to bow the knee only at the shrine of a mechanized universe, and an invariable cosmic law, Join the bawdy house chorus, in proclaiming that it is all a deception, a matter of ignorance and superstition. Let them laugh. Let them applaud their own stinking wit. We can only pity them, and offer them a helping hand.

The angels of God knew, Mary knew, Joseph knew, that it was a new departure, something God had specially wrought. Ten thousand times ten thousand of those who have passed within the veil, and associate, on somewhat familiar terms, with the great world of spiritual realities, know that this is a truth, and not it fiction. Innumerable thousands of those, who still carry the temporary veil of obscuring flesh, know that the babe in the

manger is of God; for we have learned to know Him as the power of God in our own lives.

II.

The Babe of Bethlehem, the son of Mary, is Jesus, the Savior of mankind.

The Christmas manger presents a wonder. Most people are interested in any kind of wonder. But there is something more here than a mere wonder. God is no magician, who performs wonders merely to set the crowd agape. This manger child became a wonder, a child of miraculous birth, in order to meet the fundamental needs of the children of men. The angel whispered into the ear of Joseph, concerning this child that was born of Mary: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for it is He that shall save His people from their sins."

The children of men present the greatest paradox, the greatest contradiction, there is in the world. In many things man acts like a god, and he is a wonderful creature. When God created man He created the most beautiful, the most highly endowed, the most delicately and harmoniously attuned, being that even He could bring forth, and put in the confining mold of flesh and blood. God's work is always worthy of the workman. It had especially to be so when He took Himself as His working pattern.

Even now man is a wonderful creature. He analyzes the substance of the stars, and measures the orbits in which they move. He has made for himself wings, and flies amid the clouds. He fashions for himself contrivances, and swims with the monsters of the deep. He harnesses the lightning's flash, and makes it do his bidding. He has learned the secrets of the ether, and talks through space half way around the world; and others, with proper equipment, catch the message from the circumambient air and reproduce, not only the words, but the modulation of the voice; yes, even the very features of the speaker. Evidently, even in his present estate, man has learned to think many of God's thoughts after Him.

With all this man is the most tragic creature that draws the breath of life. In the midst of life he knows himself to be a perishing creature. He builds empires, and they fall to pieces under his hand. He erects costly and beautiful temples as monuments to commemorate his name, and fame; and they crumble to dust to mingle with his dust. He constructs wonderful

pieces of mechanism, and they crush him to death. He makes fortunes for himself, and dies with his hands clutching the glittering gold. He writes oratorios that the angels might pause to hear with delight, and his fingers grow cold and stiff in the playing of them, and his ears grow deaf in the hearing. Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?

Even this is but the least of the tragic story. Man suffers least in his body, subject as his body is to suffering, and capable as it is of suffering. The major part of human suffering is in man's immaterial part; in his mind, in his affections. Man knows that in his better part something has died. He feels, dimly, that he has been disinherited; that there is a goal he ought to attain, but that there are fetters, unshakable shackles, holding him back. There are dismal forebodings that disturb his slumber, and startle him in his waking hours with fears he cannot define.

What is the secret of this bitter, baffling, biting tragedy in human life? The angel of God whispered this secret into the ear of Joseph: "He it is that shall save His people from their sins." Sin, a little word; but one which tells the story of all the tragedy that has dogged man's steps from Eden to the morn of Judgment. Sin, a little word; but that which names the disease, the dread, paralyzing, baffling, consuming disease, which is back of all the cries of distress that have been going up to high Heaven these thousands of years.

But, is it true, that which the angel whispers into the ear of Joseph: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from, their sins"? Thank God, it is true. That is the one great meaning of Christmas. That is the reason there is no other wonder like this, save the other half of this same wonder, on Good Friday and Easter, that so grips the hearts of men.

God is God; a Father; "Our Father"; "Our Father" in a thousandfold more realistic sense than any human father. God could not be the Father-God He is without putting all the wealth of His life, and all the wealth of His kingdom, into the service of rescuing his deceived, wandering, willful, ruined children. This is the mystery of God's love which the Scriptures call grace. This is the secret back of those words no angel from the throne of glory could ever have conceived: "God so loved the world, that He gave

His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

“Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people.” Away with foolish questions.. Any normal child can ask a hundred questions the wisest man cannot answer. Any babbling fool can ask questions no theologian, and no scientist, can answer. We are not going to bother our heads this morning with any high-flown subtleties. We are going to gather around the manger of the babe of Bethlehem, and rejoice and worship. It is a real human child, born of a real human mother, flesh of her flesh; but without a human father, born, in “this wise,” of an act of the will of God. This child is our Savior. If our sins are to be forgiven, He must forgive them. If these hungry hearts of ours are ever to be satisfied, He must satisfy them. If these dimly conceived yearnings of ours are ever to be realized, they must be realized through Him. If the stream of life is ever to break through the obstructing bars, and flow full and free in us, He, Jesus, must drain off the corroding poison, and there must come the healing touch of the stream that flowed in, and flowed from, His own blessed veins. All that is necessary is for us to reach out the hand of faith and say, Lord Jesus, I need Thee, I take Thee; take me, heal me. Herein is the secret of the all-pervading joy that is spelled — Christmas.

III.

The Babe of Bethlehem is Jesus, the son of Mary; our Savior: to be that He had to be Immanuel— God with us.

The Babe of Bethlehem; the child of Mary; a child of wonder; the gift of God. But one thing more is necessary if He is really to be Jesus, who is able to save His people from their sins. The angel whispered this other truth into Joseph’s ear, “they shall call His name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us.”

Every baby born is a new wonder. Every human life, in a way, is a daily miracle. There have been other lives whose coming into the world have been by special act of God. Such were Isaac, and John the Baptist; but of none of these could it be said, what is here said of the Babe of Bethlehem, “Immanuel, — God with us.” God did not only send Jesus, God was in

Jesus. Jesus did not only have some of the gifts of God, Jesus was God. “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.”

“Immanuel, God with us.” The eternal Son of God has taken up, into permanent union with Himself, a perfect human nature, to live as a man among men. Mystery of mysteries! Who can fathom it? Who can explain it? Human thought staggers before it. Reason, myopic human reason, rebels against it. But, from the first, far off, dim annals of human history, this is, after all, just the thing for which the souls of men have been crying out. In the heart of all men, philosopher and peasant, civilized and savage, alike, there is an implanted, but oft an inarticulate, craving of the soul for God. With this craving a demand, almost as insistent and imperious, for a manifested God. The cultured and the uncultured alike demand that sometime, somewhere, the veil shall be drawn aside that shrouds the invisible God.

The wise men, coming from afar, seeking the Christ, were but illustrious types of men and women, of all ages, and all lands, of whom it is true, as the Psalmist says of himself: “My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.” Many do not know what it is they need, or just what, or whom, they seek. But the need is there. In some form the cry goes forth. This is the explanation of the thirty thousand gods of man’s own devising we find in India. This is the explanation of the success, and the permanency, of religious leaders like Buddha, Confucius, Mohammed, and others. It is the secret of the vogue of our many modern cults. It is another one of the many terrible tragedies of human life that so many people cling to shadows instead of the substance, and take refuge in lies, even when the light of truth falls on them full in the face.

“Immanuel, God with us.” God with us. We are wont to linger lovingly over these words. The eternal Son of God has joined His life with our nature and our life. There is a new nuptial between Heaven and earth, between God and man. God has come to reveal Himself to man, not in the blinding flash and the terrors of Sinai; not in the unbearable brightness of deity unveiled; but in the gentleness, and beauty, and familiar form of a human life fashioned anew by the hand of God Himself. God has come down to live with men, to walk with men, to talk with men, to work with men, and for men.

“Immanuel, God with us.” This is our word of greatest assurance. We know now, as we never could have known otherwise, what God’s disposition toward us is. We know now that what Jesus did for us God did for us that the sins for which He paid the penalty are actually paid, blotted out; that the righteousness He provided for us has eternal worth; that the life He gives to us is from the eternal fountain of life, and must be victorious; that the counsel He gives is authoritative. Now we know that we are safe. Our eyes may strain to see the way, and fail; but He, our friend and Savior, knows it perfectly, and leads the way. The road may be steep at times, and our limbs weak and all atremble; but He, our God-man brother, is strong, and He bids us lean heavily on Him. And when strength utterly fails He takes us up, and bears us on His bosom.

“Immanuel, God with us.” As we know, it was in a cavern stable. A lowly place. But there is no place so lowly that manly purity and uprightness may not rest there in honor; no place so marked with the pinch of poverty that womanly modesty, and lily-white purity of soul, may not find rest there, and the maturing divine plan of the ages be wrought out in her life. Always God is there; nearer than the air we breathe, nearer than hands or feet.

“Immanuel, God with us.” God with us; God for us; that He may become God in us. In some fashion, I know not how, I am not overly much concerned to know just how it comes about; but somehow the miracle of Nazareth and Bethlehem, in some lesser degree, is to be wrought in every believing life. God came to dwell in the babe of Bethlehem, so that we have, as a Savior, a God-man. And Christ comes to dwell in every human life that will receive Him, so that we all may become Christ-men, and Christ-women.

This doctrine of the indwelling Christ, of the Christ actually coming to live in our lives, has been too much overlooked; because of which our lives are the poorer. Jesus Himself was the first great teacher of this doctrine. “I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for apart from Me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered... If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” “The glory which Thou hast given unto me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and Thou in

Me, that they may be perfected in one.” St. Paul caught the vision, and the import, of this truth. We call him Inspired. He was. But he never wrote a line about Christ that he himself had not experienced. More than one hundred and fifty times he speaks of the Christ who lives in him, and in us. He tells the Colossians that their life is hid with Christ in God. St. John, whose spirit soared the celestial regions, says: “If we love one another, God abideth in us, and His love is perfected in us, hereby we know that we abide in Him, and He in us; because He hath given us of His Spirit.”

This, then, is the story of the Babe of Bethlehem. God created, in a new and heavenly way, a new human life, as a fit dwelling place, and instrument, for His eternal Son, who came to be God with us, to save us from our sins not only by forgiving us our sins, but by dwelling in us to help us rebuild our lives, so that we, once more, and forever, may bear the image of our God. Glory to God in the highest. Amen.

New Year. Keeping The New Year With Jesus.

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read.

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he opened the book, and found the place where it was written,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovering of sight to the blind, To set at liberty them that are bruised, To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down: and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him.

And he began to say unto them, Today hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears.

LUKE 4:16-21.

AS YOU ENTER St. Mark's Square, in Venice, and proceed slowly towards St. Mark's church, your attention will be attracted by the striking of a clock. This clock is in the upper part of a tower, built near the close of the fifteenth century, and standing on the north side of the square, about on a line with the facade of St. Mark's. At the top of the tower, on the side facing the square, is the dial of the clock elaborately wrought in blue and gold. Surmounting the tower are life-size bronze figures of men, mechanically so arranged that, with the coming of the hour, and quarter hour, they raise their arms and strike a gong, thus tolling the passing hours.

I was fascinated every time I was in the square when these bronze men struck the hour. I would pause, look, and wonder. I imagine that even the gay Venetians, and the crowds of idlers of many nations that while away so many precious hours in the cafes of this world-famous spot, must all pause occasionally, when they see these bronze men at work, or hear them, to think a few serious thoughts about the relentless flight of time. But do men need the bronze men of Saint Mark's to remind them of this? Everything about us conspires to remind us of this fact. The rotation of the seasons, the course of the sun in his flight, every tick of every clock on the mantel, and a hundred other things, all combine to tell, in language more forceful than any I can command, of the passing days and years.

This is not all. Every heart-beat is a knock at the door of conscience telling us that the moments are slipping by. Every glance in the glass, at least on the part of those who are growing older, as we notice the locks that are growing thinner and grayer, is a reminder of the many years that have flown, of the few that remain; at least for us.

Now comes this annual festival, New Year's Day, its still another reminder. It tells us that another twelve months has gone to join that numerous company of years of which we can say only this, — they have been.

We are wont to greet each other on this day with the suggestive phrase: Happy New Year! Is there anything in it? Is it only a friendly wish? Is it a phrase which has meaning only for the young, who have not yet been caught between the upper and nether millstones of the grinding cares of life? Or does it contain a possibility for all men, in all conditions of life? Thank God the latter is true; true if we have learned the right relationships and adjustments of life. Our text for today reveals the secret of an unfailingly happy, I should rather say, an unfailingly blessed, New Year. Let us consider its lessons, taking as our subject: Keeping the New Year with Jesus.

Be it known that the acceptable year of the Lord, of which Jesus speaks in our text, is not, in any particular sense, what we call New Year's Day. It is quite probable that Jesus had in mind the Jewish year of Jubilee; when slaves were set free, when debts were canceled, when alienated lands were restored, when everybody made practically a new start, and joy was

universal. In the highest sense, the period when Jesus was actively engaged in His redemptive work, the time of His ministry, His preaching, His many deeds of mercy, was the world's greatest year of Jubilee, of deliverance, of restoration. This period was the world's acceptable year of the Lord. For us the acceptable year of the Lord is any day, any year, any period of time, in which the things of which Jesus speaks become realities in our lives.

I.

Before we can think very intelligently of spending the New Year with Jesus, we need to know how Jesus Himself spent His New Year, that is, His days.

At the time of which our text speaks Jesus was back in Nazareth, His old home town. Here He had grown from child to youth, from youth to manhood. Here He worked in the carpenter shop with Joseph. Here He had dreamed the dreams of youth; the dreams of growing power, of coming conquests. Here He had wandered over the quiet hills, living over again the heroic events in the lives of His people's forebears. Here everybody knew Jesus; knew Him, I think, as a dreamer; a dreamer of great ideals that had to do with life, individual and national.

Here in Nazareth Jesus had grown into His human soul-consciousness of oneness with God. Here in Nazareth, this quiet hill town, the people were more truly religious than in many other places. Joseph and Mary were among the most truly religious of all the religious people of Nazareth; not religious in that abnormal, unbeautiful way that repels people, and makes religion seem to be an unnatural something grafted onto life. They were religious in that beautiful life-transforming, life-sweetening way that wins the admiration and the praise even of those whose lives are different, and who are not disposed to be convinced that there is any supernal power aiding in the development of such a life.

The Nazareth family undoubtedly belonged to the Hasidim; the quiet, pious, believing, expectant people of Israel; who kept-alive the consciousness of being God's chosen people, through whom He was going to reach out to bless the world.

Jesus, from His earliest years, was reared in this kind of atmosphere. His first memories would be of the confession of his people: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One." The little Jesus would see this confession

fastened on the door post of their modest home; it was probably stitched in the corners of His little robe; it was the substance of their morning and evening prayer; it was often spoken at mealtime; it was, very likely, the first conscious thought that crossed His mind when He awoke in the quiet hour of the dawning of the new day.

It was in the life of His parents that Jesus first learned the deeper meaning of religious names and terms. Mary had always shared the hope of every noble Jewish mother, that her first-born might be God's promised One to Israel, and to the world. Now that she knew her hope had been fulfilled, what pains she would take to rear the boy to love men as God had loved her. It was as the boy Jesus looked up into the pure eyes of such a mother, and beheld her reasoned conduct, that His human soul caught its first glimpses of the meaning of God, and Heaven, and religion. We hear but little of Joseph, but we can have no doubt that He had his place, and fulfilled his sphere, in the unfolding God-consciousness of the human soul of the boy Jesus. Joseph was pure, and sparing in his speech; tender and solicitous in all his relationships. In him the law, ancient and holy, had become interwoven with the texture of his life. The nearness of God, and the measure of love that had come into his life, had modified, as was intended, its austerity. But he lived its spirit. He was the incarnation of honesty, of truthfulness, of purity. A more tender father, more self-giving, and sacrificial, never brooded over a budding life than Joseph over the boy Jesus. From Joseph I am sure that Jesus first learned the meaning of that word, later so often on His lips, so deep engraved on His heart, so generative of the moving power of His life, the word, "Father," "My Father."

In this environment, the child Jesus grew into youth. By the influence of His home-life, and the God-life that was in Him, He had kept the citadel of His personal life unspotted. In all His relationship, even now, Jesus showed that His was a soul born to love. His heart went out to the needy and suffering. A tear on the cheek of a child, brought there by the harshness and heartlessness of another, was an outrageous thing to Jesus. The tell-tale marks in the faces of those with whom He was brought into touch; the marks of sin written in the face, indicating loss of purity of mind and heart and body, and in itself inducing a spirit of levity and irreverence; this hurt the sensitive spirit of Jesus-for it was a hurt to the race of men of which He

was an integral part. He loved these people. He would have rescued them; He would have liked to give of His own pure nature to them. When Jesus saw the coarseness of the men and women around Him, their familiarity with evil, and their pleasure in it, His heart was saddened; He knew that it meant moral breakdown on their part, and a loss of the vision of God.

This, in brief, is the background of the life of Jesus which prepares the way for an appreciation of our text. At this time He had but recently entered on His ministry. His human soul had come into full consciousness of His oneness with God, and of His calling to be the world's Savior. He had been recently baptized, and the eternal Father had publicly testified of His Sonship. He had been on a preaching, teaching tour of Galilee. Now He is back home, in old Nazareth, the center of so many sacred associations, of so many tender ties. It is the Sabbath day, and He goes with His family to the synagogue, the community meeting place, for worship. This, we are told, was His custom. The building was, no doubt, a very commonplace one. There were no celebrated rabbis there to read and teach the sacred books, as there were at Jerusalem, for instance. But Jesus loved the place. He always had loved it. He loved His neighbors with a warm, brotherly heart but He did not go to the synagogue to meet them. That was incidental. Jesus loved beauty, He was fully able to appreciate it; but He did not go to church to behold striking architecture, or to look at beautiful art glass, or to meet the persons of noted rabbis. He went there to meet God, to open His heart to God, to give God a chance to meet with, and speak to, His soul.

In the synagogue service they read two Scripture lessons, very much as we do today. It was the custom that any qualified member of the synagogue was eligible to read one or more of these lessons; so an officer of the congregation, who, probably, had known Jesus all His life, and knew something of His recent activities, handed Him the sacred book, and Jesus read, to the standing congregation, a few verses of the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah; then they all sat down, as the custom was, while He made comment on what was read.

Though brief, this is a wonderful passage in Isaiah. It has in mind the Jewish year of Jubilee; every fiftieth year, in which all slaves, who desired it, were set free; in which all debts were canceled, all alienated lands restored, and general rejoicing prevailed.

Having finished His reading, Jesus closed the book, and said: "Today hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears." The Jewish national Year of Jubilee was but a faint type and shadow of that far greater time of Jubilee which dawned over Israel, and the world, when Jesus came to cancel, by His own payment, the debt of sin; to restore to men their alienated heritage of life; to give to men a new liberty in the power of a God-filled life; to make them heirs of everlasting riches.

This is the way Jesus kept His New Year; in contemplating the things of God, in living in fellowship with God, in proclaiming the truths of God; in the fellowship of worship with His fellowmen, in helping others to find God.

II.

From Jesus we are to learn how to keep our New Year.

We have not had such a background as Jesus had. We may have had pious parents, who meant well by us. We may have been reared in Sunday-school and church. Our parents, and teachers, did not have such splendid material with which to work as did Joseph and Mary, and the Rabbi of Nazareth. But here lies the meaning of entering the New Year with Jesus. He came for the very purpose of removing the greatest burdens under which we stagger. He came to give us the vision of the things of life the lack of which makes our lives poor. Not only to give us the vision of these things, but actually to give us these things themselves.

The fundamental lack in human life, whereof come most of our ills, is lack of God-consciousness, lack of vision of God, lack of fellowship with God, lack of knowledge of the will of God. Cut off from the source of our being, it is no wonder our lives seem detached, wandering stars without any fixed orbit, without starting point or destination. Jesus came to take the scales from our eyes, to reveal to us the meaning of things, to put us on the right track, and to give us the power to keep going straight.

Where and how does Jesus do this? Sometimes He works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. But ordinarily He does His work in an appointed, orderly way. Our God-consciousness, our conscious fellowship with God, our knowledge of His will and ways, in our own lives, and in the world comes to us in much the same fashion that Jesus' human

knowledge came to Him. From the age of four He sat in the school where God's Word was taught. He went to church. He heard the Word, He read the Word, He meditated on the Word, He prayed. He got up from His knees and went out to practice what He had learned, whereby He got an appetite for still more of God, and the things of God. If ever our lives are to become less empty and frivolous; if ever we are to get so that we do not need everlastingly to be running after something to amuse and distract, because we have that in our own minds, our own hearts, our own lives, which satisfies us beyond anything else in the world; if our lives are to become increasingly richer, fuller, more meaningful; then we must follow the example Jesus set. Nothing else, nothing less, will do. There is no substitute. For all these thousands of years, the possibilities of the radio were here. But people had to learn to tune in to get the messages floating everywhere through space. God is here. God is everywhere. We have to tune in to get in touch with Him. And Jesus has shown us how to do it.

Knowing His own worth, to God, and to the world, Jesus had a passionate love for men, of whom He was one. Jesus did not belittle Himself. He could not. He knew who He was, and what His life meant to God. Knowing His own worth, He knew the worth of men, to whom He was brother. The burden of Jesus' heart was His sense of the estrangement of His brothers from God. The dedicated task of His life was to win men back to God. Seeing Himself, He wanted men to see. Being free Himself, He wanted men to be free. Being whole Himself, He wanted to mend the lives broken on the rack of sinful living. Because of this Jesus dedicated His life to the great work of emancipation, to living and preaching the Gospel of the great year of God's Jubilee; the time of grace, the time of forgiveness, the time of the restoration of man's lost heritage, the time of integrating human life with the life of God.

Brethren, no one can really enter and spend the New Year with Jesus without having caught something of this spirit from Him. We must not underrate our worth, or the potentialities that dwell within us. I know we are poor sinners, lost, weak, undone and wretched by nature. But there is not a man living who is not worth ten thousand worlds to God our father, and to Jesus our brother. It is hard, at times, to believe that He cares so much for us; but He does. We cannot understand why He would pay such a price for our redemption, but He did. We must come to realize it and build on it. It

will help us to grasp the hand that is extended for our rescue. It will help us to enter the gate that opens invitingly before us.

No man can enter thus into a New Year with Jesus without catching something of Jesus' spirit of service. One of our hymns says, "That man may last, but never lives, who much receives, but nothing gives." Getting and not giving can be spoken only of material things, and of men who know not God. A man of the world may be rich in gold and silver, and want to keep it all. But the moment a man is rich in God, there is an irresistible urge to share his riches with others. When a man has passed within the veil and his soul holds direct communion with the life of God, there comes over him a deeply felt compassion for those whose lives are haunted by the sense of the absence of God. Just as the consciousness of the satisfying presence of God in our lives grows, so grows the desire to help those not so fortunate. This is the only adequate explanation of the passion for their brethren of men like Isaiah, John the Baptist, Paul, John, St. Augustine, Luther, Wesley, Moody, and others.

Let us not be mistaken about this. We are not all gifted alike. We can not all be fiery, gifted evangelists of the spoken Word. But we can all be evangelists of the lived word. What we can not say in words, we can say in deeds. Both have their place.

I am inclined to believe that Jesus was often a rather silent companion. The deep waters are the silent waters. But His every move was eloquent of loving thoughtfulness for others. The hand that rested lightly on the arm of His mother was eloquent of tenderness and solicitude. The very tones of Jesus' voice carried evidence of His thoughtful care for the happiness of others. His brothers and sisters always knew they had a friend and helper in Him. No one, not even the casual passerby, or the stranger within the gate, could fail to notice this tender solicitude on the part of Jesus for all humanity. Life, all human life, had a deep, rich meaning for Jesus. He had learned to know its nature, its burdens, its possibilities, the glory it might attain.

Let us make this one of the objects of our concern this New Year. Some of us have been preaching Jesus. Let us not cease doing so. There is no more blessed message, or blessed activity, under the sun. But let us live Jesus a little more this New Year. Let us find less fault, and love more. Let

us keep down that loud, rasping voice, and speak gently. Let us demand less, and give more. Let us think less of finding happiness, and more of giving happiness. Let us think less of self, and more of others. I know this is a big order. But if we have entered the New Year with Jesus, and keep close to Him, and follow His orders, He will help us live up to it. Above all, let us not fail, as we go along, to say a good word for Jesus Christ, the friend, the helper, the Savior of mankind; the only author of the world's New Year of Jubilee.

Let us not put off this new program. We have often thought of doing these things. We have often had impulses in that direction. Let us not delay any longer. Time is flying. Life is short and uncertain. Let us begin today.

When I have time, so many things I'll do,

To make life happier and more fair,
For those whose lives are crowded now with care,
I'll help to lift them from their low despair, —
When I have time.

"When I have time, the friend I love so well
Shall know no more the weary, toiling days;
I'll lead his feet in pleasant paths always,
And cheer his heart with words of sweetest praise, —
When I have time.

"When you have time! The friend you hold so dear
May be beyond the reach of all your sweet intent,
May never know that you so kindly meant
To fill his life with bright content.
When you had time.

"Now is the time! Speed, friend, no longer wait
To scatter loving smiles and words of cheer
To those around, whose lives are now so drear;
They may not need you in that far-off year:
Now is the time."

Something like this is the way we must live and act, if we would keep the New Year with Jesus.

III.

What is it going to mean to us if, in some such measure, we keep the New Year with Jesus?

There are some things I cannot attempt to foretell. I cannot tell whether during the year we are going to have health, or sickness; but I can tell this, if we walk closely with Jesus, we will have the comforting consciousness of knowing that it did not come from knowingly transgressing His laws, and we shall not be without His comfort. I cannot tell whether, in our business, we are going to have good fortune or ill; what we call success, or failure: but this I can tell, if we live, and work, and transact business, so as to meet the approval of Jesus -and more and more the world has to come to this standard, if we are to live, and prosper-then, whatever befalls us, it can do us no serious hurt; but, if our reaction is right, it can prove only a blessing. This is something that can be understood and appreciated only by those who have learned the meaning of life, and the way of life, from Jesus.

There are some things concerning which we can speak with certainty; the certainty of divine truth, and multiplied experience. If we spend this new year, not just New Year's day, but the new year, in close companionship with Jesus, we are going to come into our own as never before, unless it was under similar circumstances. Come into our own, what do we mean by this? I do not mean a fortune. I do not mean position in life. I do mean those things which come nearest to making us the men and women we ought to be. By coming into our own, I mean coming into that power which makes us free men and women. We have no shackles on our hands, or our feet. But many, who boast of their freedom, are slaves of their passions, their tempers, their feelings, their prejudices. To walk close to Jesus means to cast off these shackles, to be calm, deliberate, considerate; to dwell in the white light of the truth and love that comes from the heart of Jesus.

If during the New Year we walk close with Jesus, and do forget, and do stumble, not willfully, not rebelliously, we shall find in Him the most understanding, the most considerate, friend man ever had. He knows how to

bind up, and heal, the bruised and broken heart. He knows how to fill those who feel their inward poverty with good things.

We are entering, today, a new period of time. The old calendar has been taken down. A new one is in its place. There are three hundred and sixty-six pages there, on each one of which a record is to be written, the story of a section of my life, your life. Are we going to be ashamed of it, or thankful for it, when we come to the last page? That depends entirely on how closely we have walked with Jesus. Suppose the hand is suddenly stopped in the middle of some page. Do we need to be afraid? Not if Jesus is our companion, and points the way.

A New Year. How time slips through our hands. So many people sleep on, not realizing the value of that which is passing away forever. This it is which determines the character, the accomplishments, the destiny, of nine out of every ten men; the use, or misuse, of time.

A new year means new duties, new responsibilities. The forward look, almost of necessity, has an undertone of fearfulness. We wonder how we are going to be able to meet all its requirements. It is well to have confidence in ourselves. Time will be ours for every worthy, necessary, task in material things. In the still more important matter of living, of living aright, of living in time for eternity, we must have more than human strength. This strength must come from Him who says: "My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in your weakness." This strength comes to those who enter the year, and walk through the year, with Jesus.

"Another year is dawning!
Dear Master, let it be,
In working or in waiting,
Another year with Thee.

"Another year of mercies,
Of faithfulness and grace;
Another year of gladness
In the shining of Thy face.

"Another year of service,
Of witness for Thy love;

Another year of training
For holier work above.

“Another year is dawning,
Dear Master, let it be,
On earth, or else in heaven,
Another year with Thee!” Amen.

Epiphany. Jesus Taking Up Life's Tasks.

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

But John would have hindered him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

But Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffereth him.

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him;

And lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

MATTHEW 3:13-17.

ON JANUARY THE SIXTH we observe the third festival of the Church year, Epiphany. This is one of the oldest festivals of the Christian Church. It was originally observed as we now observe Christmas, as the anniversary of the birth of the Savior; and, as such, it was considered the beginning of the Church year. After this was changed, so that December twenty-fifth was observed as the anniversary of Jesus' birth, Epiphany was observed in the Western Church as commemorating the coming of the wise men who were seeking Jesus, and, as such, it came to be known as the Christmas day of the Gentile, or non-Jewish, world. In the Eastern Christian world Epiphany was observed as the day celebrating Jesus' baptism.

Though the Eastern and the Western Churches connected different events in the life of Jesus with the Epiphany festival, the underlying idea is the same. Epiphany means a revealing, or manifestation. And, in this connection, the manifestation of Jesus as the Son of God, the Savior of the world. Of this central idea we should never lose sight.

In the modern Church, at least in the Western world, Epiphany does not occupy the position of prominence its importance deserves. It is overshadowed by the high festival character of Christmas and New Year, both so near. This first of Church festivals needs to be restored to more of its original position of Importance. We need constantly to give emphasis to the fact that Jesus, whether of the manger, or the baptism, is the eternal Son of God, manifest for our redemption and salvation.

Today, with the words of the everlasting Father: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," constantly in the background of our thinking, let us consider the story of Jesus' baptism. We will take as our subject, Jesus Taking Up Life's Tasks.

I.

The first thing we are going to consider is not explicitly contained in our text, but is assuredly suggested by it to every thoughtful reader. This thought has to do with the way the human Jesus grew into consciousness of His great calling, and with the noble way in which He accepted its challenge.

Too often, in treating this text, we dwell, almost entirely, on the circumstances of the moment of Jesus' baptism. Certainly they should not be neglected. But is it right to overlook the process of the years, and what it had wrought in the life of Jesus? In my way of thinking, Jesus' baptism, with its attendant circumstances, was but the fitting climax and seal of what the process of the years had wrought in His life.

When Jesus appeared at the Jordan, where John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing, it was, with one brief exception, His first known appearance in public life. Back of this event are almost thirty silent years. But they were not inactive years. They were anything but wasted years. They were years of silent, but steadfast, growth. Never, before, or since, was there another such life lived on earth; never was there another such life

of meditation, of reflection, of searching out the deep things of the universe, of man, of God.

We must not forget, as we proceed, that Jesus Christ, while essentially, and eternally, the Son of God, -the Son of God in the manger, the Son of God during the quiet years at Nazareth-was also, truly, and essentially, the Son of man, with a true human body, a human mind, a human soul, a human life. Though we may not explain all its intricacies, or trace all its implications, the record tells us that Jesus grew in stature, developed in understanding, and increased in favor with God and man. This is an unmistakable statement of human development. There is no doubt that this development took place, largely, in, what we may call, a natural way.

Everything in Jesus' life was conducive to the best, and quickest, development of His human life. He had been miraculously protected from the taint of sin. His environment was the best. His home life, in secluded Nazareth, breathed simplicity, and depth of life. Love, gentleness, helpfulness, devoutness, communion with nature, communion with the deepest and best in man, communion with God; these things formed the breath of life in the home in which Jesus was reared.

Jesus, as a youth, and young man, was in possession of that rich heritage which all the longing souls, and burning minds, of the ages, had garnered in their quest for an answer to those insistent questions of the human soul about the infinite personal Life at work In the universe, and in the souls of men. Jesus had spread out before Him the records of the revelations which this infinite personal Life had made to the moral and spiritual geniuses who had stood on the lonely mountain tops of human experience, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Isaiah, and others. He read these revelations with eyes such as had never perused them before. As Jesus mused by the evening brazier, as He wrought at the daily task in the carpenter shop, as He wandered over those quiet hills about Nazareth in the evening twilight, as He joined the multitude, as it wandered over the hill and through dale to the holy city, as He observed their great national sacrificial services, and joined in their great national acts of worship, Jesus mused, and the fire burned. The meaning and purpose of the universe, the meaning and destiny of human life, and the meaning and relationship to all this of that great principle of Life, who conceived, and wrought, and preserves, and

overrules, and loves, all this; these were the things much in the human mind of Jesus in those early days.

The pure in heart shall see God. Jesus was pure In heart. He always had been. From the first, much, very much, clearer than others, He saw God. At an early age He displayed a knowledge that put to shame the knowledge of sages. As a man Jesus knew God as no other man ever knew Him; because, as no other man, He was able to enter into fellowship with God. As no other man, the outreaching soul of Jesus was able to become conscious of, and to enter into fellowship with, the outreaching, seeking, life of the everlasting Father.

There are moments when flashes of light enter the human mind, and the human soul. It is so with many of the great discoverers in the wide fields of secular knowledge. It has been true of many of the seers and saints of God. There were, no doubt, times like this in the life of Jesus. But in the main, I think, Jesus' human knowledge of God, of the things of God, and of Himself in relation to God, and of His relationships to God's great world-plans, was a matter of progressive unfolding; the natural result of the life He lived, and the course He pursued.

The successive steps of Jesus' unfolding consciousness of God's fatherhood, and His own sonship, no man can trace, for there is no record. But at an early age there was one unmistakable utterance which gives clear evidence of Jesus' human dawning consciousness of God's fatherhood. It was on the occasion of Jesus' first visit to the temple; when He spoke for the first recorded time of His calling to be about His Father's business. This consciousness of fatherhood and sonship reached its climax in the life of Jesus when He was able to say: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." This classical utterance revealing Jesus' consciousness of God's fatherhood, and His own sonship, was delivered at the climax of His Galilean ministry.

The correlative of fatherhood is sonship. As the human mind of Jesus discerned, and the human soul of Jesus grasped, the idea of God's fatherhood, by the same token, and in the same degree, did He realize His own sonship, its nature and purpose. This consciousness of sonship, on

Jesus' part, was not merely the result of prolonged meditation, and the piecing together of fragments of evidence. It was, in no small degree, the result of the outreaching, seeking life of the Father finding and realizing itself to the outreaching, seeking human soul of the Son. No man can find God till he is sought of God. Finally in the contact of the seeking Father with the seeking soul of the Son, there came to be a conscious recognition of the seeking One by the sought One, and the soul of Jesus cried out: "Abba, Father."

With the growing human consciousness, on Jesus' part, of God's fatherhood, and His own sonship, there came a corresponding consciousness of vocation. I think it is clear that the youth Jesus, at twelve, had a dawning outline consciousness of what His great life task was to be. Then already, with His human will, He had resolutely set Himself to be about His Father's business.

At the time of John the Baptist's ministry, eighteen years later, Jesus had come into full, clear human understanding of God's fatherhood, of His sonship, also of His Messiahship, and of its meaning to the world. More than this, Jesus had come to a full understanding with Himself as to the part He was to play in His Father's plan for the world. In His human life Jesus had come to grips with Himself. He had made up His mind, He had set His will, to carry out the Father's plan for the world's salvation. Whatever the cost, in tears, or blood, He was going to be His Father's right hand in carrying out the Father's plans. This means that the human nature of Jesus was not simply something that was hurried hither and thither by the Deity that was in Him; but that His human nature also chose to do the will of the Father.

When Jesus came to John's baptism, He saw, in all its great inclusive outlines, all that was before Him. It was with clear seeing eyes, with resolute will, with warmth of devotion, He came to the Jordan to take up His great task. Of His own human will also He dedicates Himself to this self-chosen, as well as God-given, task. This, as I see it, is the first great truth to be kept in mind in considering the baptism of Jesus. Without this view, the baptism loses much of its significance, its beauty, and its stimulating effect.

Viewed in this way, what wonderfully thought-provoking, heart-stimulating, will-determining lessons there are for us in Christ's baptism. This day by the Jordan is worthy of being placed by the side of that later day when, possibly with still clearer vision, Jesus resolutely set His face toward Jerusalem, to meet Calvary and the tomb. It deserves to stand side by side with that night of trial in Gethsemane. This crisis in Jesus' life, crowned by His baptism, is one of the most morally beautiful, one of the most sublimely heroic, events in the life which, in its totality, was the most morally beautiful, and sublimely heroic, that was ever lived.

What lessons there are here for us. We are not the sons of God as Jesus was the Son of God, as to either nature. But all of us are sons of God by the gift of life. Most of us are sons of God by a new birth. Have we caught the vision of God's fatherhood? Do we realize the meaning of our sonship? Do we realize that God's fatherhood, and our sonship, means cooperation, whole-hearted cooperation, on our part, in carrying out the Father's plans? Have we caught the vision of a world at the heart of which is our Father, who has made Himself known through Jesus Christ, and that the one big, worthwhile task in this world is to help carry out His plans? Have we dedicated ourselves, by God's grace, to this holy service?

II.

After considering the background of Jesus' baptism, how He grew into human consciousness of His calling, and resolved to accept it, and carry it out, let us consider the evangelist's description of the baptism itself.

Let us not forget that through the years Jesus, as a man, had grown into full consciousness of the divine purpose of His life. Jesus saw, with clear eye, the needs of mankind. With equal clearness He understood the Father's will. Just as clearly, Jesus recognized His own relationship to the world's need, and the Father's will. With Jesus, to see was to act. Jesus never temporized, or compromised, with duty, or with conscience.

In the days when Jesus had come to this full consciousness of His life-work, He heard of the ministry of John the Baptist. He recognized its meaning. He knew that the time for action, on His part, had come. He laid aside, for all time, the tools of His trade. He said farewell to the folks in

Nazareth. With resolute steps He set His face for the lower reaches of the Jordan, and the shores of the sea, where John was preaching.

Jesus knew what the outcome was going to be. He knew the carnal expectations of His people. He knew they were dreaming of an earthly king; a second, possibly, a greater, David; a warrior with flashing sword, who would cut down their foes, and force kings to bring them tribute of gleaming gold and silver coin. They were looking for a king who would change their slavery into mastery, and their present masters into slaves. Jesus knew that it was not His mission to give to His people these things which they were determined to have. He knew that because He would not do these things they would reject Him, torture Him, kill Him. Jesus knows all this, but He does not hesitate. He will give them, not what they want, but what they need. He will give them all that He has, all of His love, all of His life, all that will make them fit for the Kingdom of God. Was ever love so great? Was ever devotion so unselfish? Was ever the spirit of holy adventure so sublime? Was there ever a heroism so godlike?

Down by the Jordan, Jesus finds the Baptist, the last and greatest of the prophets; the first and least of the evangelists. The Baptist was himself a child of miracle. He had spent much time in the desert; and had the mind and heart of one who had spent long days and nights in meditation, and in close communion with nature, and nature's God. The Baptist's very appearance was such as to fire the hearts of an imaginative, dreaming people, in whose breasts smoldered the fire born of years of oppression, but which had not smothered the memory of a bygone age of glory.

John the Baptist was a Nazarite. His locks were uncut, and his face was unshaven, unmindful of mere comfort, his body was wrapped around with a camel skin, bound around the waist with a leather strap. His skin was tanned a tawny brown by the bright eastern sun. Unpolluted in his life, and with his soul aflame with love for God and men, John's eyes flashed with the fires of deep conviction; and his words cut into the consciences of men like a Damascus blade. People trembled at John's message; but they were irresistibly drawn, in crowds, to his ministry.

It was a strange crowd that surged around John. Here was a people contaminated by Greek influences, ruled by a crowd of usurpers, scorned by the Romans, betrayed by their own priests, hoping for sweet revenge,

haunted by memories of vanished glories, and haunted by dreams of greater glories yet to be. To these ill-informed, unspiritual people, John is a prophet of fire. He denounces their hypocrisy; their vain, ill-founded hopes. He calls for repentance, and a new life. He announces the nearness of a new order of things. To this disunited, already greatly dispersed, people, John makes an appeal, the appeal of one who is regarded as the last hope of an unfortunate and despairing people.

In the midst of this excited, greatly moved, multitude Jesus appears. He listens, He observes; and He is assured that His early conclusion concerning John was well founded. In due time, and in becoming manner, Jesus makes Himself known to John, and asks for baptism. John, by the light of the Spirit that moved him ere he was born, and not by mere human knowledge, recognized Jesus as the One sent by God; yea, as the very Son of God Himself. All the innate modesty of John's own nature, and all the beauty and nobility of the nature and character of Jesus, which John recognized, arose as a barrier to compliance with Jesus' request for baptism. "What," says John, "I baptize You? I have need, great need, of being baptized by You; but whom am I that I should baptize You?" Thus would John, honestly, sincerely, have hindered Jesus from being baptized at his hand.

John's baptism was a baptism unto repentance, as his call was a call to flee from the wrath of God. Those who came to John's baptism acknowledged that they were sinners in need of cleansing. In view of this, John, with all his light, could not see the propriety of Jesus receiving his baptism. Why should He, who came to baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, why should He submit to this initial, preparatory, baptism of the new way?

Jesus was no sinner. Even in His human life He had been saved from the touch and taint of sin. Baptism wrought no change in the inner life of Jesus. He was the ever pure One who alone can make men pure. His first recorded words were of the same tenor and texture as His last. There was no second birth even in the human life of Jesus. His after life was not the calm which succeeds the period of storm and stress. Jesus' human life was all of one piece, unfolding in the white light of Heaven to full knowledge, settled conviction, and determined purpose.

Jesus explains to John the meaning of all this. In tender infancy, by circumcision, He had become a son of the law. Now, in man's estate, He sees all God's plan, and that it is His business, as the Son of man, to accept God's challenge, His call, and enter on His work. It becometh us, both Jesus and John, to accept, with God's plan, all His ordinances. It became John to perform the rite. It became Jesus to submit to it. This, then, was Jesus' public, and official, entrance, as the Son of man, on His life of Messianic obedience to the will of God for man's redemption and salvation.

We poor mortals, at best, get only glimpses of the deep things of God. Now we see as through a glass darkly. Lord, anoint our eyes that we may see something of the beauty, the sublimity, the meaningfulness of this scene of the ages down by the Jordan. Knowing the consequences of His step as He did, may it be given us to understand and appreciate the manliness of Jesus' conduct, His holy determination, His willingness to do and die, that God and man might be served.

Most of us have stood by our Jordan. God did something for us there, something no man could ever do for himself. But if God was permitted really to do something for us then, it means that we are to do something for ourselves now; something for our fellowman, something for God. That baptism we received was a washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. It was also a dedication to tasks high and holy. It was a dedication to the life-long fight for self-improvement; for the eradication of evil passions, and growth in godliness and the power of service. Do we understand this clearly? Do we see the beauty of a life filled with such a spirit? Are we fired with the lofty purpose to progressively realize this meaning of our baptism? Are our wills set for the accomplishment of it? Is Jesus' baptism an inspiration to us? Is Jesus, the perfect man, the perfect God, our source of help?

All Heaven, I think, was deeply moved when Jesus was baptized. Gabriel, who had borne those blessed messages to Zacharias, and Mary, and led the chorus announcing the birth of Jesus, must have beheld, with holy rapture, this further unfolding of the Father's plan of grace. Martial Michael must have trembled with holy exultation as he beheld this new warrior, greater than himself, who was to enter the lists against the prince of darkness. That scene there by the Jordan must have seemed strange to the very angels. Why should we feel called on to explain it all? Let us just let it

stand as it is. Here was the eternal Son of God. This Son of God, in the fulness of time, had taken unto Himself a full human nature, a human mind, a human soul, a human will, a full human life, with all its normal faculties. This human life had a normal development. Now, in the morning of His manhood life, having become conscious of His call, Jesus dedicates Himself, as He was dedicated by God, to the great task of doing God's will, of preparing salvation for the world.

As Jesus went up from the place of baptism, He paused to pray. There is much discussion about the need, and value, of prayer. Pause, and think, ye doubters. We cannot answer all the questions the speculative-mind may ask. But answered, or unanswered, this spectacle, and others like it, in the life of Jesus, ought to be enough for us. Jesus felt the impulse to pray. In some sense His human soul needed it, and found help in it. This ought to be enough for us. What Jesus, in the perfection of His manhood needed, we need a thousand times over.

As Jesus prayed, the Heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God descended upon Him in visible form. As the author of Acts puts it: Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power. The mystery deepens. What was the purpose of this coming of the Holy Spirit? He did not bring to Jesus, as He brings to ordinary mortals, the creative principle of a new life. Jesus did not need it. This unusual bestowal of the Holy Spirit was, undoubtedly, a public attestation of Heaven's approval of Jesus. May not this gift of the Holy Spirit have been to Jesus Himself the seal of that consciousness of Messianic calling into which He, according to His humanity, had grown? Was there not, in this measureless anointing with the Holy Spirit, some strengthening even of Jesus' perfect human nature for the superhuman conflict into which He was now, for the first time, actively, and officially, engaging? It seems to me that this may have been the case. For, to the very last, by virtue of Jesus' own words, in Gethsemane, there was, in His human nature, a will in which there was the latent possibility of rebellion. If this be so, then the anointing with the Holy Spirit was a help in the process whereby the human nature of Jesus was so enfolded by, and so permeated with, the God that was without Him, and the God that was within Him, that His human nature, too, was ever held unfalteringly true to the purpose of God in redemption.

Now, from the opened Heavens, through which the Holy Spirit had visibly come, the voice of the eternal Father was heard making this announcement: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We have been accustomed to apply these words about sonship almost exclusively to Christ's divine nature. I do not question that the Father's words include this; that this was a true epiphany, a declaration of Jesus' divine sonship. But I seriously question whether the words are to be confined to this. Now, as never before, Jesus saw the meaning of His life in the divine plan; made this plan His own, dedicated Himself to it in His human nature. Now, as never before, the spotless, holy Jesus, in His manhood, had become the Son of God. Not only by virtue of action by the Godhead, not only by virtue of a natural endowment of human holiness; but by free choice of His own knowing will, by the freely determined choice of continuous cooperation in spite of all possible opposition, and consequent suffering, Jesus was now, in His human life also, the Son of God, beloved, and acclaimed.

What Jesus won at His baptism He kept all through life, His Father's approval. Jesus' sonship, tried and true, makes our sonship possible. We cannot earn it as Jesus earned it. He earned it for us. As the Son of God, and the perfect Son of man, Jesus paid our debt, and won eternal riches for us all, if we will accept it.

My son, my daughter, beloved; this our Heavenly Father wants to say of every one of us. Of course, not in the same sense in which Jesus was His Son; but just as really nevertheless. Every penitent soul, every believer that comes to Jesus Christ to be forgiven, is a son, a daughter, beloved of God. There is something eternally worthwhile in this. But now, cleansed; with rivers of free grace flowing for our strengthening, the everlasting Father would like to see in us something of that moral grandeur, something of that purposefulness of life, that led the human Jesus to Jordan to accept God's plan of life, and dedicate Himself to God's work in view of which the Father said: My beloved Son. Amen.

Palm Sunday. Mary's Offering Of Love.

Jesus therefore six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus raised from the dead.

So they made him a supper there: and Martha served; but Lazarus was one of them that sat at meat with him.

Mary therefore took a pound of ointment of pure nard, very precious, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet, with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.

But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, that should betray him, saith,

Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred shillings, and given to the poor?

Now this he said, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and having the bag took away what was put therein.

Jesus therefore said, Suffer her to keep it against the day of my burying.

For the poor ye have always with you; but me ye have not always.

JOHN 12:1-8.

IT IS NOT FAR from Jerusalem to Bethany. It is, as we would say, just over the hill. You leave Jerusalem by way of St. Stephen's gate, go down

into the narrow valley of the Kedron, and, turning to the right, proceed southward right by the lower walls of the garden of Gethsemane, through the old, much neglected, Jewish cemetery, and pass over Olivet, which at this point, is much lower than it is opposite the city and presently you are in Bethany. By this road the distance is three miles, or more. Directly across Olivet it is not more than half this distance.

Personally, I was much disappointed with Bethany; more so than with almost any place in Palestine. It lies right on the dusty highway from Jerusalem to Jericho. It is anything but clean in appearance; and seems to be in a general state of decadence. I am sure that it was all quite different in that far off day of which we read in the New Testament. In that day there was at least one home in Bethany that was out of the ordinary; the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. This was a real home. The record seems to indicate that it was this in size, appearance, and equipment. In the highest sense, it was a real home. In the truest sense, it was a home of culture. This home bulks rather large in the Gospel record. It was a favorite stopping place with Jesus when He was in the vicinity of Jerusalem. The members of this home were disciples of Jesus, and His dear friends. Our text tells us of a memorable meeting in Bethany, where Jesus was the guest of honor; and of the service Mary rendered Him, which we shall call: Mary's Offering of Love.

I.

Let us give a little attention to some circumstances memory calls up when we have before us the names: Martha, Mary, Lazarus, Jesus.

After a journey from the hills of Galilee, during which the cross was looming up nearer at every step, Jesus reached Jerusalem six days before the Passover. In the evening of that day, we find Jesus just where we should expect to find Him, in the hospitable home of His friends in Bethany. These people had learned that Jesus had returned, and they made a feast for Him, and His disciples, and invited their Bethany friends. Jesus was no recluse. He did not shun the social hour. He did not have a stoic heart within His breast. The presence and converse of friends was a pleasure to Him as to any normal man. And there is no doubt in my mind that Jesus added His quantum to a clean, wholesome, pleasant hour.

The mere mention of Martha, Mary and Lazarus in this text involuntarily recalls the preceding chapter of this Gospel; and it is quite apparent that the writer intended that it should do so. That chapter tells us of the death and raising of Lazarus. "Lazarus is dead" was the announcement that caused no little commotion among the disciples up in the hills of Galilee. And in the home at Bethany there were hopes alternating with fears, till, finally, all present hopes had died and were buried with him who had lain four days in the grave. The harp of life was mute. All its vibrant strings had snapped. Then Jesus came. At His omnipotent word: "Lazarus come forth," the harp of life became vocal, all its strings became vibrant, musical. Lazarus came forth to the utter astonishment of all present. Then, because of the renewed, and intensified, opposition this miracle aroused, Jesus withdrew for a season from the vicinity of Jerusalem. Now He has come back for His last visit, and His passion. And again we find Him in Bethany with His friends.

All the indications are that the home under consideration was a rather unusual one in Bethany. It may not have been pretentious, it probably was not. The homes that are ostensibly pretentious are usually for show. And where people live for show they generally live very much for themselves, and there is usually very little open-handed, warm-hearted hospitality. Some people would much rather have real friends than a fortune. These people in Bethany had friends, and the latchstring hung on the outside of the door. And no one was more welcome in that home than Jesus.

We usually think of the home where this supper was held as that of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. St. Matthew tells us it was the home of Simon, who had (when a leper, and had, probably, been healed by Jesus. Home think, it is purely a conjecture, that Simon and Martha were husband and wife; that Mary and Lazarus lived with them, their parents being dead. However It may be as to these details, we have in the story of these people a beautiful picture of family life. They were bound together by ties of respect and affection. What was the concern of one was the concern of all. What threatened one was felt by all. In addition to the ties of blood, they were bound together by the additional ties of ideals held in common, and by the bond of a common faith. I venture to say this was an unusually happy family. They faced the world with a united front. And they smiled back at the world with a courageous and radiant life. Where there is no such family life there somebody has a distorted view of life, and a selfish disposition.

And an unloving, and unhappy family, where every one is pulling in a different direction, is about the nearest approach to hell on this side of the grave. If it is not the result of the lack of vital religion, it is bound to lead to the loss of vital religious faith and experience.

II.

Let us now look in on the festive scene in this home at Bethany.

In the early evening hours of the sixth day before the Passover, various persons might have been seen wending their way toward this outstanding home in Bethany. Over in Jerusalem the hatred of the Jewish leaders was growing fiercer, more determined; but here in Bethany there was a circle in which the light of Christ-love still burned on the altar of human hearts. Here there were still ears which longed for the sound of the lips which spoke with the accents of Heaven. Here in Bethany, away from Jerusalem with its hubbub and glare and pretense and cold-hearted formalism, Jesus found a welcome and a refuge. Kindred spirits seek each other, usually find each other. Here Jesus could find rest and sympathy. Here He was at home with congenial spirits.

Now the feast of the evening is on. There is joyous laughter and friendly converse. There are serious thoughts in the mind of Jesus, but He does not cast an unnecessary shadow over the company. One of those prominent in the company is Martha. She is in her element, joyous in serving. And seated at the table along with Jesus, the twelve, Simon, and the others, is Lazarus; Lazarus whom Jesus had so recently brought back from the home of the dead. Much of the feeling of grateful joy that prompted all that went on this evening was the result of his presence, in vibrant health, the gift of Jesus' power. Mary was there, — Mary of the large, warm heart, and teachable disposition.

It was Mary who caused the sensation of the evening. Every one loved Mary. Martha loved her whole-heartedly, even if she did consider her somewhat impractical; and if she did, on a very few occasions, become a little impatient with what she considered her impracticability. Mary was a dreamer. She was largely ruled by her heart. She was willing enough to help; but she was apt to wander away, and get lost in the world of thoughts, dreams, hopes, and temporarily forget her tasks. Jesus, and His teachings

about life, and the world to come, were much in Mary's thoughts; especially so since He had brought back to life her much loved brother.

Mary does not seem to have been assigned any particular task this evening. There were probably plenty of willing hands in that congenial company for any task. Mary, however, was busy preparing to carry out plans of her own. Presently she was seen entering the feast chamber, bearing in her hand a costly vessel filled with a still more costly ointment. With becoming modesty, but impelled by a love which could not endure to be balked by the restraints of mere conventionality, she proceeded at once to the triclinium, or couch, on which it was customary to recline at meal time, and poured a generous portion of the precious spikenard on Jesus' head. Not satisfied with this, she poured another generous portion of the refreshing unguent on the Master's feet, and wiped them with her flowing hair, the highly prized ornament of her womanhood.

Under other circumstances, among other people, this action might soon have been touched with the viper breath of scandal. Not so here, and with these people. These were bosom friends. The shadow of a great sorrow was still in their minds. The light of a great God-given joy filled their hearts, permeated their lives.

This anointing was a work of love, of purest gratitude. Jesus was supremely worthy of it. He had given Mary her brother from the grave. He was her teacher. From Him she had learned to rejoice in the assurance of forgiveness. With His help she was beginning to get clearer visions of life, and all the spiritual realities that have to do with it, both here, and beyond. The close horizons of those near Judean hills were being lifted. Far off realms of truth were coming into view. Life was becoming fuller, richer, more worthwhile.

III.

Mary was a woman with a talent for truly, purely, loving the Lord; and with an intuitive grasp of the meaning of His life for all human life. This was a golden deed which she had done. But here, as nearly always, there was some one, yes, at first, only one, ready with a captious criticism of her deed.

As soon as the odor of the fragrant spikenard began to fill the room, and the full significance of Mary's act began to be realized, a voice was raised

in condemnation. If the situation had not turned out as it did, probably still more people might be tempted to smile at her act as an exhibition of womanly emotional weakness. At the time there were darker thoughts than this. Judas, the man who carried what little money any of the company might have, and who was greedy and grasping, yes, at heart, a thief, begins to think of the monetary value of that which Mary had used. That was the only way he was able to estimate such an act. And he could not regard it in any other light than as a pure and wanton waste. Presently his rasping voice could be heard throughout the chamber: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" We dislike the spirit of Judas; but we admire his astuteness. Judas was wise with the wisdom of the serpent. In presenting his objection, in which he possibly hoped to win, the approval even of Jesus Himself, he plays the role of a popular philanthropist; one much concerned about the poor and needy. For the moment, he got a large part of the assembly to see the matter in the light in which he professed to see it.

Poor Judas, we pity him. His soul life was dying, If not dead already. His faith had vanished. The fount of love in his breast had become congealed. There was no quickening of the pulse, no tide of sweet emotion sweeping through his soul when he saw, or thought of Jesus. Judas had fostered such a life that he could think of no one but Judas. It seems it was not even personal vanity; no conceit of good looks, or thought of mental superiority, or gift of leadership. It was Just the craze to hold in his palm a piece of silver or gold. As a result, he could not understand how Mary could waste fifty dollars in anointing Jesus; but he had it in his heart, or soon would have it in his heart, to betray Jesus for fifteen dollars. This is the kind of man who finds fault with the service Mary rendered Jesus. Are they always the superior men they seem to think they are, mentally superior? morally superior, who object to what they are wont to call the sentimental service others render to Jesus Christ, as the prince of the sons of men, and the unique Son of God?

IV.

Who shall be Mary's defender? Who shall plead her cause? She could not do it. Her love for Jesus had to find expression in deed, and when rebuked she could not defend herself in words. But she is not wanting for a

champion. Jesus defends Mary's conduct., If this situation had not turned out as it did, probably many others, beside part of that company in the Bethany. home, would be carried away by the specious objection of Judas. It was Jesus who silenced, forever, the cavilers. "Let her alone. She hath wrought a good work on Me. She is come beforehand to anoint My body for its burial. Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in all the world, there shall this, that this woman hath done, be told as a memorial of her." Thus, at the hands of Jesus Himself, there was erected, to the name and service of Mary, a monument which shall endure when the monuments of stone have crumbled to dust, and the tablets of brass have been wasted away by the wearing hand of time. Why this monument? Not simply because Mary anointed Jesus' head and feet at a cost of fifty dollars; but because this anointing was prompted by a faith and love which had first enthroned Him in her own heart as Savior. How explicit Mary's knowledge of Jesus' passion as the source of redemption I do not know; but implicitly she accepted it without question. Nineteen hundred years after, as Jesus predicted, we are simple enough to help keep alive her name and deed as a believer in Jesus, and a lover of Him.

Jesus appreciated Mary's act because it was one of faith and love; and, further, because the breaking of the alabaster box, and the outpouring of its precious content, was one of the finest symbols of what He was going to do in a very few days. Mary's love was the human prototype of His own love, which was going soon to come to its mountain top of testing in the breaking of the human temple of His own life. The precious ointment outpoured was a symbol of His own precious life poured out, not only in love of the world, but for the spiritual health of the world. On the cross of Calvary the heart of Jesus, the heart of God, was revealed toward man; as in the festal chamber in Bethany the heart of Mary was revealed toward Jesus.

V.

Is this service Mary rendered, this offering of love she presented, to be simply casually recalled and commended, or is it to be imitated?

Mary's deed is to be remembered. Jesus' words indicate this. It is to be spoken of that others may share with us the memory. But Mary's act is to be imitated. If we have the love in our hearts, we can imitate this action every

day. Jesus is not sitting, visibly, tangibly, at our tables so that we can pour the fragrant ointment literally on His head. But essentially, so far as Jesus is concerned, we can do this very thing. Jesus tells us that He, personally, is served in every cup of water, and in every piece of bread, that His disciple, in His name, and for His dear sake, gives to the least and lowliest of His brethren. Jesus is anointed with the best and most fragrant we have when, as a result of our faith in Him, and of our love for Him, we entrust ourselves to Him, and seek to build our lives according to His pattern, and give ourselves to the work He assigns.

Rightly to imitate Mary's act, we must come to Jesus as Mary did. Why did Mary anoint Jesus? Because He was a congenial rabbi? Because He was a mystic, an idealistic dreamer, who could talk intriguingly of visions, and ecstatic states? No, nothing of this. Mary's devotion was born, first of all, of an indisputable fact. Jesus had raised her brother from the dead. Putting this along side of the hope of every true Israelite, she had come to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, who was to be Israel's deliverer, redeemer, Savior. In some way, how, or how clearly, I do not know; but in some way she was beginning to realize that His life was the price He would have to pay to accomplish all this. If you ask, how could she know this, I answer with a counter question: How did Zacharias, and Elizabeth, and the other Mary, and Simeon, and Anna know what they knew about Jesus? There is only one answer. It was the gift of God. There are no limitations to what God can communicate, or to the manner of communication. Mary's deed of love was the response of her heart to what she saw with the eyes of her soul.

Wherever there has been the same kind of recognition of Jesus the heart has made something of the same kind of an offering of love. That is the secret of the life of John, and Peter, and Paul, and Augustine, and Luther, and Francis of Assisi, and tens of thousands less well known, but just as worthy.

This impulse to make an offering of love may express itself in many ways. In one instance, it may lead to a life of seclusion, deep contrition, and meditation; in another case, the vision of God draws the soul of the beholder, as it were, out of himself, and into ecstasies of word and action; of another it may make a missionary, a deaconess; another it may lead to build a cathedral; and still another to build a life after the divine pattern. No one

can ever get close to the personal Savior without getting this impulse to devote something to Him.

Young people, this day some of you are going to take a very important step; a step for which you have been in preparation for months; a step which will be attended by the prayers of your parents, your pastor, and all who wish you well-today you will be confirmed. There ought to be few days in the whole course of your life that will make a deeper impression on you than the service of this day. This day in your life ought to be something like that day Jesus spent in the temple when He was twelve; ought to be something like that day down by the Jordan when Jesus came to be baptized; both of them epochal days, days which registered new visions, and new resolves.

To my way of thinking, there are not many texts more suggestive for a day like this than the one which we are privileged to consider this morning: the story of the feast in Bethany, and Mary's offering of love. This is the day when, in keeping with your training, and prompted by the blessings already received, you are to take the alabaster box of life, with all its precious content, all your endowments and capabilities, all you hope for of achievements, and lay them down at the feet of Jesus. He is eminently worthy of such an act of trust, of devotion, of allegiance. He accepts it, and will be your friend and champion. He will never fail you. Do not fail Him.

As it was in the case of Mary, there will be many who will speak slightly of your devotion to Jesus Christ, and misinterpret the motive of any offering you may give Him. But if your heart is the vessel with which you have come to anoint Him, if faith and love compound the ointment with which you are going to anoint the Master, then be not disturbed, your own soul will approve your conduct, and the Master Himself will be your defender, now, and before the bar of Judgment.

Two human figures stand out prominently in this little text, Judas and Mary. Judas was now growing into treachery, and was soon an active traitor; all, I think, because he did not truly know Jesus, trust Him, or love Him. A person like this is likely soon to be capable of anything. Mary may have been a dreamer, an idealist, her heart may have led her head; if so, she never had any reason to be ashamed of it, the sweet perfume of her generous deed has been wafted down through the ages. Let each one of us

ask himself this question: What have I resolved to be, what will I be when the great Master comes to make up His jewels, a Judas, clutching his little bag of coin? or a Mary with her generous offering of love?

Easter. The First Easter Day.

Now late on the sabbath day, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it.

His appearance was as lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

And for fear of him the watchers did quake, and became as dead men.

And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, who hath been crucified.

He is not here; for he is risen, even as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

And go quickly, and tell his disciples, He is risen from the dead; and lo, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

And they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring his disciples word.

MATTHEW 28:1-8.

EVERY DEVOUT CHRISTIAN down through the centuries has stood, in thought, on Good Friday, on Calvary beneath the cross; and on Easter morning has stood in Joseph's garden by the tomb, and, in

imagination, has seen the angels, heard the messages, and witnessed the scenes which there took place: but, with the most vivid imagination, and keenest sensibilities, none of these thousands have ever had the experiences of those who were there that first Easter morn.

There are experiences in human life which men can know only by personally living through them. Men may read about them, hear others speak of them, till they know every detail; but as to really knowing what such experiences do to life, and mean to life, this, they can know only when they, themselves, have had the experience.

The lessons of the Passion and Easter season are unmistakably of this character. I am certain Good Friday can never affect us in just the same way as it did the first disciples. To them, in spite of numerous warnings, it came suddenly and unexpectedly, like a flash from a clear sky. It was diametrically opposed to all that was involved in their hopes and plans. We understand the permanent and universal lessons of the season much better than those people did; but the shock, the heart break, is lacking. We know beforehand what the outcome is going to be. It is the same way with Easter. This day can not come to us with the conflict of emotions, with the transports of joy, with which it came to Jesus' first friends and disciples. It can never be a surprise to us as it was to them. Our understanding of these things is much clearer than was theirs. Our grasp of the situation is far in advance of theirs. But the element of tragedy, the contrasts, as of midnight and midday, the transports of joy resulting from a victory snatched out of leaden skies, and the pangs of defeat, these and kindred things we can know only faintly, as echoes from a distant shore.

Good Friday, to these people, was like a frightful nightmare. They were too greatly shocked to think connectedly. Their beautiful dreams of empire, of liberty, of plenty, which would prepare the way for, moral and spiritual growth, and the increased coming of the kingdom of God, was ruthlessly dispelled. As the hours wore away, and they saw the insatiate grave claim the form of Him they loved, and on whose activities they had built so much, all they could say was: "We had hoped." Of all sad words, of tongue, or pen, the saddest are these: "It might have been." Only one thing was left to these men and women, they still loved; and, though wounded, and bleeding, and all but hopeless, love means much. It is often the prelude to better things. It is a solace even to a crushed spirit.

When Easter morn burst on these people, they had much the same experience. Again they were dazed, but dazed with joy. The news was so great, so sudden; so utterly unexpected, they simply could not grasp it; they had to grow into it, and it took hours, and days, to do it.

We firmly believe that it is useless for us to try to put ourselves in the place of the first disciples, so far as their inner experiences are concerned that first Passion season, and Easter day; for, in their case, they were involved with ties of kindred, personal friendship, and national aspirations; besides many beliefs, aspirations, hopes which, as yet, were but glimmering in the dawn of a coming day. But all the precious truths of lasting benefit to these people are ours as much as theirs. Their experiences, of mind and heart, while probably not without benefit, were not fundamental. That which really profited was that these people should fully and finally learn that Jesus was the Son of God; that He had not died as a helpless victim, but in fulfillment of God's eternal plan for the world's redemption; that His resurrection was as inevitable as it could be made by the omnipotence of God; and the eternal sovereignty of truth, and righteousness, and love.

These were the only things that were eternally worthwhile to the Marys, John, Peter, and the others. They are just as vitally, and eternally worthwhile to us. Let us consider some of these pertinent thoughts this morning, taking as our subject: The First Easter Morn.

I.

There are three progressive steps noted in our text. The first is that which tells of the women visitors who came to the tomb of Jesus, and found it empty.

Let us think, for a moment, of what these women had witnessed on Good Friday. The merest stranger, who had never heard of Jesus, His words, of His works, would have been depressed by that scene. A normal mortal cannot see the life crushed out of a tramp, or a criminal, without some feeling of pity. Such a sight usually casts a gloom over one for hours, often for days. This is the result of that natural feeling of kinship between man and all other men. It is the natural feeling of sympathy on the part of the man who lives for the one who has to die. It is a witness to the grip life has on us.

Who, then, can understand the feelings of those who stood in close touch with Jesus? There were ties of kinship, of strongest friendship, and of discipleship, holding them to Him. They had begun to associate with Him visions of a new and better order of things that was to reach, with progressive development, into the eternities. Then, all at once, their hopes crushed. The darkness in the realm settled over were of nature that the Palestinian world that Good Friday afternoon was but typical of the intellectual and spiritual darkness which fell, practically without warning, over the minds and hearts of Jesus' friends and disciples. Who can describe the state of suspense which was theirs that Sabbath day? Their hearts, their hopes, were buried in that sealed grave in Joseph's garden.

Now, in the early hours of the first day of the week, before the world was astir, some women of the group of disciples are on their way to the tomb. But it was with benumbed hearts, and leaden feet, that they went; for they were hopeless. They were going out only with the thought of being able to complete the burial rites, so hurriedly performed on Friday eve. The dead in heart were going to visit the dead in body.

As these women moved along, with eyes that were open but saw little, their uppermost question was: "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" As long as such thoughts filled their minds, they could dwell only in the shadows. The sun was just peeping over Olivet, the birds were sweetly singing their mating hymns, all nature was smiling; for it was a spring morning; but it was dark in the hearts of these women. It would have been just as dark in ours, had we been in their places. The beauties of nature can have but little appeal to those whose hearts are buried in the grave, to those who know only a closed grave. As long as the question is: "Who shall roll us away the stone" from Christ's grave, and ours, that stone is going to rest, with full force, in our hearts.

"Tis midnight with my soul, till He,
Bright morning star, bids darkness flee."

It makes but little difference to the unaided human heart when they find an open, and an empty grave. I doubt whether one fear was quelled, or one sorrow was assuaged when the Marys found Jesus' grave open, and His

body gone. Unaided human reason gives no satisfactory explanation for such a phenomenon.

II.

The second step in the unfolding Easter message is reached when the women, who had found an empty grave, meet angel visitors with a message.

Strange things had taken place while these women were on their way to Jesus' grave. This place was an object of interest not only to the Marys, to John, to Peter, and the others; it was an object of infinite interest to the inhabitants of Heaven, from the Father on the throne, down to the last and the least of the celestial beings which surround the throne. Some of these also had been commissioned to visit the grave of Jesus. The hand of God rocked the earth, and caused it to tremble. The angel moved the great sealed stone from the entrance to the grave to show that the Lord was no longer there. He had already gone on His victorious way. At the sight of those triumphant visitors from the realms of glory, those sturdy Roman soldiers had fallen to the ground paralyzed with fear, though they had probably sufficiently recovered to flee in terror before the women arrived.

An open and an empty grave was what the women saw when they arrived in Joseph's garden. Their first thought, probably, was that a new indignity had befallen the body of Him whom they had loved and lost; that some prowling vandals, or insatiate enemies, had taken it away to further desecrate it even in death. But they were soon reassured. Those heavenly visitors, in the form of men, dispelled their fears. This was the purpose for which they came. God marks the tears of His children. All Heaven takes wing when threatening fear takes hold of one of God's little ones. "Fear not," say these heavenly guardians of Jesus' tomb. "Fear not." Thank God for these words. There is something, then, to dispel these dark specters that clutch at our throats, and stab us in the heart with bloodless daggers. "Fear not," these words mean sunlight, courage to look up; it means that life has gotten a grip on things; not that there are no difficulties, but that there is a way out of our difficulties.

Say these angels: "Fear not, I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified." But you have come to the wrong place. The cemetery is not the place to seek, for long, the Son of God. "He is not here, for He is risen."

This was the glorious news the best of witnesses proclaimed. It marked the dawn of a new day for the disciples, and the world. That of which the world, in all ages, had dreamed, and hoped, was now a certainty. Here was an historic instance of life triumphant over death; yes, the death of the body. Death and the grave were not victors. Life is the victor. As the soul of Jesus had never died, it had now come to claim its body. It was like a glorious sunrise after Stygian darkness. Indeed, the contrast was too great; the news was too good, it could not be grasped all at once.

Have you ever been far down in a mine, or a cave, where, for hours, you groped about in the flickering light of a lantern? If so, when you stepped out into the intense light of the mid-day sun you were partially blinded. The extreme brightness pained your eyes. You had to shade them with your hand. You had to become accustomed to the light. So it was with the first disciples. That Jesus had arisen from the dead, that in His body He was alive forever more, that was too good to be true, even though an angel told them. At least it was such good news that it could not be assimilated all at once.

It is much the same with men still today. In the minds and hearts of men everywhere, and of every degree of culture, there is a smoldering hope, a lurking belief, that man, though he die, shall live again. To come to men with this message of the risen Jesus, and the assurance this gives that they too shall rise, opens a new world of thought. It helps to dispel some of the gloom which the pall and the grave have cast over mankind. But with all this, until something else happens, men can never be entirely satisfied. There must be another witness; and until men have His testimony, they can stand only in the cold gray half light of the dawn.

III.

The final step in the unfolding Easter messages, was taken when the women, who had seen the empty grave, and heard the angel's message, met the risen Jesus Himself.

The record. says that as a result of the words of the angel visitors, the Marys started away from the grave with haste; but it also says that it was with fear, as well as joy. They knew that something wonderful had taken place; something that they now felt was full of portent for good. What it

was had been clearly stated in words; but the minds of these women, lifted from the depths, were in a state of amazed bewilderment. What they needed was not only time, but a t certification of the message which even angels had spoken. Man can rest securely on nothing save the voice of God to his own mind and heart. It came to the seeking Marys. God Almighty, at the right moment, always meets the seeking man's needs.

As the women were leaving the garden, Jesus Himself met them with the usual salutation of His day: All hail. They knew Him. They fell down at His feet, and worshipped Him. It took more than an empty grave, it took more than even a well authenticated report, to satisfy these women, and heal the wounds Good Friday had made; and give them back the full measure of their joy. It took Jesus Himself. In Jesus come from the grave, they gradually found much more than they had ever found before. They found God in Him as they had never found Him before. He was the same dear friend as of yore; but as never before they began to recognize in Jesus the Son of God who came to deliver men from their sins; to give unto them, increasingly, the beauty and power of His own life; who was, in the fullest sense of the word, their Savior; and that in Him rested the secret of their own ultimate triumph over death in soul and body.

That first Easter day was the beginning of a new era of life for these women, and all associated with them. With that day's sunrise began the dawn of their real understanding of Jesus; and marked the beginning of a closer, more helpful, walk with Him, which was not interrupted, but rather furthered, when the Heavens received Him out of their sight.

The same is true of the twelve. St. Mark tells us that when Mary Magdalene met the risen Lord, and came to recognize Him, she hastened to meet these men. But they did not believe her. Her words were to them as idle tales. When Peter, having heard this report, ran hastily to investigate for himself, he went away wondering confusedly at the things that had come to pass. The two, on the way to Emmaus, spoke sorrowfully to Jesus Himself, whom they did not recognize, of the hopes that had been theirs. The reports of Jesus' resurrection seemed to them as an idle tale. They all had to see the risen Jesus themselves. Some of them insisted that they would have to see the wounds in His hands and feet. More so even than the women, these men could not be satisfied with an empty grave; they could not rest with mere reports, however well they might seem to be authenticated. I, for one, am

glad that these men and women were not too easily convinced. What it took to convince them was the risen, living, victorious Jesus. When these men met Jesus face to face, and were convinced that it was not a mere specter they were beholding, they were entirely changed men. The darkness which oppressed them had rolled away. The terrors of the prospect of persecution and death had vanished. A wondrous strength and courage took the place of their former weakness and fear. They became undaunted and invincible.

The same is true of St. Paul. He seems always to have been a man who did not know the meaning of the word fear. He was as thoroughly convinced as a man could be that Jesus was an impostor. But when Paul met Jesus face to face all opposition vanished. If you follow the course of the afterlife of Paul, you find that he refers everything in his life to that personal meeting with Jesus; and the indwelling Christ whom, from that day, he knew.

What was true of men and women that first Easter Is true of us today. Easter flowers, and Easter music are both fine; but of themselves they do not put the real spirit of Easter into the souls of men and women. To speak, in general terms, of a resurrection may awaken an intellectual interest, and suggest a possible solution of distressing situations; but it is not enough. Just to hear the report of a risen Christ is not enough; it was not enough for the Marys, or Peter, or Paul. The only thing that can fully, and finally, satisfy is to meet and know the risen Christ Himself.

I believe the Gospel record. It is just as true as the message of the angels. It came from the same source. But as long as it is a mere record on paper, it is not going to drive away the fears that gnaw at our hearts. It is only when by and through the record we come personally to know the personal, living, victorious Christ, that Good Friday, Easter, forgiveness, life have real vital meaning for us; this drives away fear, and fills the heart with peace and joy.

If this be the condition of Easter joy, Easter peace, Easter assurance, you may say: Then we are excluded from possessing these blessings. Not in the least. Jesus Christ is just as knowable today as He was that first Easter day. We do not see Him with these natural eyes. We do not hear Him say, audibly: All hail. He does not say to us, as He once said to doubting Thomas: Come, see the wounds in My hands and feet. But He does come, nevertheless, and very really, too, to every seeking, believing, waiting soul.

“The Spirit of God bears witness to our spirit.” “This is eternal life, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus.” St. Paul tells us that, in the last analysis, nothing counts but knowing Christ, and the power of His resurrection. St. John says, “Hereby we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.” “Hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He gave us.” “We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ.” Try it. Learn the mind of Jesus, as revealed in His Word. Seek earnestly to do His will. Cultivate His acquaintance. Live in communion with Him. Then you, too, will be able to say: “I know whom I believe in.” There will be no more questions about salvation, or Jesus’ resurrection, or our resurrection, or any of these fundamental things.. You will know the power of it in your own life. You will have experienced a resurrection within your own soul as remarkable as the resurrection of Jesus’ body.

Well may Easter share the exultant joy of Christmas. The one marks the beginning, the other the end, of the Redeemer’s active earthly life-work. Christmas tells of that great act of condescension whereby the Son of God joined His life with ours. On Good Friday the curtain falls on what seemed to be defeat complete and ignominious. Easter tells us of the victory that proves that Good Friday also was victory, the world’s greatest victory of bearing, suffering love. Easter tells us of Jesus’ victory over sin and death. Through Him, and in Him, we have come into newness of life. By Him our bodies are to be raised to immortal life. This is the glorious message of the first Easter day. We will know it beyond cavil when we have met Jesus face to face. Amen.

Ascension. Jesus' Coronation Day.

And he led them out until they were over against Bethany: and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven.

And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem, with great joy: And were continually in the temple, blessing God.

LUKE 24:50-53.

“A hymn of glory let us sing;
New hymns throughout the world shall ring;
By a new way none ever trod,
Christ mounteth to the throne of God.”

O SANG THE VENERABLE BEDE twelve hundred years ago when he thought of the content of our text. So we sing on this anniversary of Ascension Day.

On the original Ascension Day the record of Jesus' historic life on earth was closed. The work He had come to earth to do in person was completed. Jesus' ascension, in its true nature, and as to its attendant circumstances, was a fitting climax to His life; especially so to His resurrection, and the series of events which followed it.

Jesus' life, from Bethlehem onward, led, inevitably, on to Calvary. It was the path of duty, of service. Because Jesus followed this path, self-chosen, yet divinely appointed; followed it steadfastly, conscientiously, devotedly,

and allowed no seductions of time or sense to turn Him aside from the path of duty; this path eventually led Him, by way of Calvary, and Joseph's garden, to the Olivet of ascension, to the crown of eternal glory, and the throne of world authority and rulership. Christ's ascension was but another, and the most outstanding, illustration of the world-old principle that only after the cross of struggle, and often death, do men, legitimately, and worthily, wear the crown.

Let us this morning consider some of the many interesting and instructive lessons presented, and suggested, by Jesus' ascension. We will call it Jesus' Coronation Day.

I.

First of all, let us think of the strenuous, and trying days and years of preparation and service by which Jesus came to wear the crown He won.

The ordinary man, when he hears of another who is distinguished by his painstakingly accumulated store of knowledge, by the remarkable service he has been able to render, by the exalted and responsible position he has come to occupy, is inclined to exclaim: How fortunate. And not infrequently his exclamation is tinged with a feeling of envy. What he fails to see is the former days. These things, as a rule, are not accidents. They do not come without painstaking, and long continued, effort. In this world of much connivance, and consequent misfits in high places, the unworthy are sometimes crowned, but their true character is soon revealed. In the world of the worthwhile and abiding, the heights by great men reached and kept are not attained by sudden flight; but they, while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night. Of no one else is this so signally and fully true as it was of Jesus. He won His ascension, His crown, by a life of the most patient, continuous, and sacrificial service.

The early life of Jesus is a subject of intense interest. When, according to His manhood, did He come to a realization of the nature and the outcome of His mission? This is a question that, probably, cannot be answered with fullness and certainty. Perhaps the vision of it was one that kept growing in clearness and certainty till near the end. But early in life He began to understand something of His mission, and its nature. He knew that He had a

call to a definite task. And He knew that its demands rose above all human ties, and obligations.

In merely human projects, men's successes give them continued inspiration as tasks multiply, and burdens increase and grow heavier. So far as tangible results were concerned, Jesus had nothing of this kind to cheer Him on the way. There were days of noisy acclaim, but there were more days when opposition made the noisy demonstration, and made it effective in bitter persecution. The only thing Jesus had to hold Him true was the inner light, the conviction of a divine mission, — His Father's call and approval.

We might say that Jesus did not mind these things. That could be misunderstood. Jesus did feel opposition. His sensitive heart was cut and bled when assailed with sneers and lies. But He was not deterred, or diverted, by the smallest fraction, from His chosen path by any of these things. Jesus had one settled standard of conduct. "In the volume of the Book it is written of Me, I come to do Thy will; O God." It mattered not by what path God's will led. It might be through green pastures, and by still waters. It might be through barren, burning deserts, where wild beasts threatened, and hunger gnawed. It might be by thronging multitudes many of whom entertained darker passions than the beasts of the desert. But Jesus never flinched. He followed the light of the Father's will, and man's need, as He saw it.

Jesus had a message to deliver from the Father. "God so loved the world," this was the glad message Jesus came to proclaim to those who were held in the chains of fear. He came to preach forgiveness, a religion of mental attitude of heart love and trust, of it new divinely created life instead of a religion of external, formal observances. He was challenged, derided, persecuted; but He went on His God-appointed way.

Finally it became clear to Jesus that teaching, however loving and truthful, would not suffice; that He, in action, as well as in life, had to give a content to His teaching. He saw clearly that only by going down Into death could He prove His own, God's, love for man, and, at the same time, as the Son of man, and brother to men, as well as the Son of God, somehow bear their guilt, and provide a way of forgiveness for them. Did Jesus start affrighted at the vision? Did He flinch, falter, and turn back? Not in the

least. There is no question in my mind that the realization of this truth went like a dagger through the soul of Jesus. He was a man, with a true man's loving heart, a pure, clean man's tender feeling. But here is the moral grandeur of Jesus as a man. He did not ask: Is it easy, pleasant; but is it right? He did not ask: Is it agreeable; but is it necessary? He did not ask: How can I ever get through with it; but just this one question, which settled everything else: Is it the will of God, is it necessary?

It was in this spirit that Jesus, toward the last, when all else was accomplished, set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem. And He followed the path, unflinchingly, ungrudgingly, without self-pity, through Gethsemane, over Calvary, down into Joseph's garden. This is the path that led to Olivet of the ascension. And had not Jesus followed the former path all the way, there would have been no ascension day, no crown, and no throne.

Is there not a lesson here for us? I know we cannot win our crowns. Heaven, eternal life, and all that goes with it, is a gift of God's grace. But having called us, and quickened us and poured out His grace into our lives for our strengthening, does not God expect us to take it, and make some response through it? Does not the Christ Himself say: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life?" We know that in this world the race is not always to the swiftest, but only those who run win. There are no prizes in this world for the shiftless and the thriftless; for the lazy and conscienceless. Have we any right to believe that it will be otherwise with the prize of all prizes, eternal life? The path has been opened, we must walk it. We have been forgiven, we should try to keep clean. Our members have been given life, we must use this life and its strength. Weapons have been put into our hands, we must fight with them. Food and medicine have been placed before us, we must partake of it. We have been given intelligence and a will, we must exert them. Then we also may confidently expect an Ascension Day, a day of coronation. All of it is a gift of God's grace, through faith in Christ.

Jesus did not go back to Heaven till His task was completed. There was no Elisha on whom His mantel could fall. What Jesus did needs no repetition while time rolls on, nor yet while eternity lasts. He fulfilled all righteousness. He bore all the world's sins. He satisfied all demands. Then,

only then, could He go back home; only then receive the crown, only then mount the throne, and wield Heaven's scepter.

Let us not become impatient of our tasks, our burdens; they fit our brows for the crown. Let us not be fearful when disaster threatens our task, or our life. There was no disaster in Christ's life. There are no disasters in the lives of any of God's believing, faithful children. All things work together for good to them that love God. Jesus was only thirty-three when He fell, as men thought, a victim. But that was the way, and the only way, to the crown. Let us be afraid only of shirking, of unnecessary delays, of unfinished tasks.

II.

Let us turn our attention now to the day, and act, of Jesus' coronation.

I have read what a good many men have said about Jesus' ascension, and few of them have said anything much about the act, and its attendant circumstances. It may be because there is little that can be said that is of much value. It may be that the proper attitude is that of the first disciples, who stood rooted to the ground, and, apparently, speechless, when they saw their Lord, and friend, leaving them, upward into the sky. But this scene, with all its attendant circumstances, fascinates me. As I stood on Olivet, somewhat near the spot whence Jesus went up into glory, I was transported back through the ages, and in dream, and fancy, I could but live through the scene myself.

Forty days had passed since the unutterable night which began Good Friday afternoon, and the unutterable day which came with the dawn of that first Easter morning. During this time Jesus had given His disciples unmistakable, and cumulative, evidence, not only that He was living; but living in His resurrected, and already glorified, body; a body made fit for heaven; and eternity. Intimately Jesus had met with them, walked with them, talked with them, ate with them. But they knew, increasingly well, that He was a being of another world. Slowly they were coming to see Jesus with other eyes. Slowly their ideas concerning Him were being changed, adjusted to His saying about a Kingdom and a rule not of this world, and not after the present order.

Now the time has come for Jesus' final farewell, as to His visible, material presence. He leads the little band out to Olivet. Whence did He come? Apparently from Jerusalem, or its immediate vicinity; down across the Kedron, up the western slope of Olivet, in all probability close by Gethsemane, then over to the eastern slope just above Bethany. What a world of associations were closely connected with this vicinity. Back of Him, and not far away, was Gethsemane with its memory of unutterable hours of darkness and soul agony. Just beyond the narrow valley, with its dome probably in sight, was the temple, which he had attempted to cleanse, and revive; but which had rejected Him, and cast Him out, and put Him to death. Down near the valley, beyond the wall, was the hill of death, with its cross still standing, grim reminder of unspeakable agonies of mind and body. Down in the valley Beneath the hill was Joseph's garden, with its silent chamber in the face of the rock, where the Lord of glory, for a little while, had rested from His labors in the embrace of death. All this came in the path of duty from which He had not swerved a hair's breadth. But all of this was back of Jesus now. He is facing the east, not the west. The sunrise is in His face. It is drawing on toward noon. The sun is approaching its zenith.

As the company looks to the east they can see, In the distance, the low lying mountains whence a lesser Joshua had led their forefathers out of the desert into the land of promise. As they look down into the lesser valley at their feet, tender memories must have come to the mind of Master and disciples. There, in the village, nestling amid olive trees, was Bethany, where the Master's word of power had brought Lazarus, His friend, back from the valley of the shadow. There In the hospitable home of sympathetic and understanding friends, Jesus had found refuge, rest, and love. No doubt these friends were with Him now, to be witnesses of His ascension.

Now the last word of command and counsel is spoken. Farewell, farewell, and the hands of their friend and Lord are raised in benediction over the little band of the faithful. As Jesus blesses them He rises Heavenward. He was not carried into Heaven by chariots and horses of fire. There is none of the accompaniment men would naturally associate with such an event. By the Heavenward set will, and power of His own inherent life, which had completed its task here, and was ripe for Heaven, Jesus, the

God who had become man and the man who had been taken up into inseparable unity with God, went up into glory.

The ascension was not a passing incident in the life of Jesus. It was not merely a passing marvel in the life of Jesus' friends and followers. There was something in it that was to have significance for all the ages of the world, and for all the eternity to come. Jesus did not return to Heaven as He had come down to earth from Heaven. He came down from Heaven the eternal Son of God. He went back to Heaven the eternal Son of God; but, in addition, a full and real Son of man. This was not merely the mysterious elevation of a mortal to the skies, as was the case with Enoch and Elijah. It was the return of the Incarnate Son of God to the throne of world-power, and world-authority.

Brother, sister, here is the marvel of Ascension Day. Our very nature has not only gone into Heaven, we hope for the same some day; but it occupies the throne of Heaven, it sits at the right hand of God, it has part in all that God does. Having been participant in all the attributes which inhere in Godhead, the human nature of the Christ is now sharing in the almightiness, the perfect knowledge, the universal rule, of the Son of God. This not now for the first time. The coronation of Jesus Christ, the God-man, at the end of His work, is the proof positive that He was the God-man, with all the attributes of Godhead, in the days of His humiliation, while He was doing His work; and that it was done completely, acceptably.

Brethren, we may well marvel as we contemplate Ascension Day. Let us ponder it long, and ponder it well. Not only has our nature gone into Heaven, it occupies the very throne of Heaven; it has part in all that God does in and through His Son. It was the divine-human Christ who declared: "All power is given Me, In Heaven and on earth." All the almightiness of God; all His knowledge; all of His world-wide, world-filling, presence; all of His love, and truthfulness, and faithfulness, is part and parcel of Jesus Christ, the God-man. This not in and of the human nature itself, but by virtue of its intimate, and indissoluble, union with the Godhead in the person of Jesus Christ.

The coronation of Jesus Christ is something at which not only to marvel. We may well do this, and probably will eternally; but it has some very practical applications. As few other things, it seems to me, it gives us

mortals heart and hope. And it helps us to get hold of, though it does not make fully accessible to human knowledge, the fact of Christ's abiding presence with His people, and His self-communication to diem; not only as the Son of God, but as the God-man, in word, in sacrament, in life. It was the God-man who ascended far above all Heavens, that He might fill all things.

I do not know the location, or the specific character, of the Heaven to which Jesus ascended. I am ,willing to wait, and be surprised. I do not know ,whether Jesus occupies a literal, material throne, or not. If He does His throne means much more than a place. According to the Word, it means the position of honor in the heavenly places. It means the place where all authority originates, the place where the world's obeisance must be made, the place where angels worship, the heart of the universe.

I do not know what took place when Jesus came home, carrying with Him, as in integral and undying part of Himself, this new nature and form. The Book tells us that the angels are deeply interested in the work of Jesus. They were interested in His coming to earth. They watched with unflinching interest His atoning work. When He came home, the glorious victor in this splendid adventure of saving love, do you not believe the Heavens must have resounded with hallelujahs?

Nineteen hundred years have passed since that first Ascension Day; but well may we stand, as the disciples of did of old, with upturned faces, wondering minds, and adoring hearts; as, in imagination, we behold the God-man, our brother and Savior, in His triumphant journey homeward, His home, and, please God, our home. Let us remember that He, of whom it is said that the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Him, is the same One of whom it was said, during His earthly sojourn, that He had not a place to lay His head that He could call His own, so far as human title was concerned. He who goes serenely and majestically into the Heavens, to receive the worship of angels, is the One who walked the earth in meekness and lowliness, the willing servant of all mankind. He whom all Heaven does, and all earth must, acknowledge as Lord and King, is the One who was despised and rejected of men, condemned and crucified. It was thus, by faithfulness unto death, that He came to His coronation day.

III.

The meaning of Jesus' ascension and coronation for those whom He left behind.

I should say that our first judgment, concerning those whom Jesus left behind on Ascension Day, would be that they were filled with dismay. They must have realized that, so far as this world, and Jesus' visible presence, was concerned, this was a final farewell. They were rooted to the spot, speechless, lost in wonder and amazement. But I think it was the dim realization of the glory and blessedness of it all that overcame them, rather than a sense of bereavement. St. Luke tells us, in Acts, that an angel came to the rescue of the disciples with a message from Heaven: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into Heaven? This Jesus, who was received up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have beheld Him go into Heaven."

This angel message, I think, brought the disciples to themselves. Their faculties began to function. The truths which Jesus had spoken to them before began to shine with a new light, they were pregnant with new meanings. A rift was made in their earth-bound senses. It did not all come at once, but they were now at least ready to understand that the religion of their fathers had a new meaning; that not Jerusalem, not Judea, not Palestine, was the center of God's world. These had been, temporarily, the center of the stage in the process of God's unfolding plans. They had helped prepare the way for larger, better things. Not Palestine, but the earth, is to be the scene for the unfolding of God's plan for man's salvation. Not earth, but Heaven, whatever it is, wherever it is, is the center of God's universe. Man is born, not to die; but live, live forever, through much travail, and upward striving, to pass into, a larger, richer state of life. Jesus had prepared the way, now traversed the way, and made it possible for those who willed to follow Him. So, instead of the disciples being permanently dismayed, and lost in an inexplicable maze, a great joy came into their hearts. They paid the ascended Christ the tribute of worship, and went back to Jerusalem with hearts elated.

Let us now see whether we can find some of the specific reasons why Jesus' ascension should have this blessed effect on the disciples, and on us.

In the first place, I conceive that by His ascension the disciples got a new conception of Jesus Himself. The Apostles had made some wonderful

confessions concerning Jesus, and His Messiahship. But it is evident that, even to the last, they had not been able to entirely disabuse their minds of the idea that Jesus was, in some sense, another, more exalted, David, or Maccabean prince. Now, in one sense, the disciples had lost a friend and companion, and they had found a Savior; they had lost a teacher, and they had found a God. This is the first time that the disciples offered worship to Jesus as to Deity.

In a sense, I say, the disciples lost Jesus. But they found much more than they had lost. He had just said to them: "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Now, as never before, the disciples began to understand that the reality of Jesus' presence did not depend on their seeing Him, or hearing His voice; but that always, and everywhere, He was to be with them with the full power and efficacy of His divine personality.

Jesus' ascension and coronation opened up to the disciples a new world of truth with respect to the Kingdom of God. With best intent, the disciples, hitherto, had looked on the religion of Jesus as a purified, and more spiritual nationalistic program; all of which was to end in a new glorification of Israel. It has always been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to keep state churches from becoming involved in nationalistic programs. Just as it is difficult, where there is no state church, to keep the chief attention of many church people, clerics and laity, from the machinery of church life and activity. All this was changed, so far as the disciples were concerned, with Jesus' ascension. By this, as, probably, nothing else, it was brought home to them that, in spiritual things, the center of gravity is away from the earth; they learned, as never before, that the real Kingdom of God, while now in the earth, and affecting earth's affairs, is not of the earth; by Jesus going away these men learned, as they had not yet learned, that the Kingdom Jesus came to establish is an institution to teach men to look Heavenward, and bend men's lives to the Heavenward ascent, and help them in it.

Jesus' ascension was fraught with many and great blessings for the personal, and official, lives of that day, and for all since that day who are open-minded, and open-hearted, to receive these lessons. Jesus' parting act was one of blessing. And this act was not a mere solemn form. It was not a mere gesture of good will. It was freighted with the grace and power of God. And it was an abiding blessing. A bond of union between Jesus and His disciples, between the everlasting Father and them, and the eternal

home and them, such as never existed, was established by Jesus' going away. Jesus had spoken to the disciples about His going away to His Father, and their Father; but till now they had scarcely begun to grasp the truth. Now Jesus going into Heaven as He did, made God, and Heaven as their home, very much more real to these men; as it does to us when we grasp it aright. Jesus' ascension into Heaven did not have the effect of making His disciples star gazers, and day dreamers, in a world so full of great problems needing solution, and of tremendous tasks awaiting to be done, as is the case with this old world. Before this they had waited for Jesus to do most of the work. Now His work, which no other could do, was done. And they saw, as never before, that Jesus had mapped out a tremendously big, a humanly impossible, task for their performance. They have learned now to trust, and follow instructions. So they wait for the promised gift of power from on high, in the strength and wisdom of which they soon launched out in the work which, through the centuries, has been slowly transforming the earth.

The task which the ascending Christ gave His disciples, the task which is to last till the consummation of the ages, is that of evangelizing the world; the task of getting the sons of men ready to follow Him, the Lord and Savior, to Heaven and glory. We, too, are to be, not mere star gazers; but workers.

Jesus Christ was parted from the earth with His hands outstretched in the act of blessing His own. There is no question that this is the attitude in which Jesus would like the world to know Him. This is the attitude in which He stands toward all His people. We can trust Him. He is not going to fail any of us.

Jesus went back to receive the crown only when His task was done. He is ever beckoning us onward on the Heavenward way; but He calls us home, to our crown, only when our day's work is done.

Lord Jesus, we bend the knee to Thee ascended, the crowned Christ of glory. But we know Thou art not absent from us. We know that Thou art all around us, working in Thy Kingdom; Thou art working in our hearts. Give us grace and strength for the day's work. When it is done, open the door, and call us home. Amen.

Pentecost. The Abiding Gifts Of Pentecost.

If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever,

Even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you.

I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you.

Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth me no more; but ye behold me: because I live, ye shall live also.

In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.

JOHN 14:15-21.

THIS IS PENTECOST, the birthday of the Christian Church, the day which commemorates the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It deserves to be classed with Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, and Ascension. Without the work of the Holy Spirit, which this day commemorates, these other days would have little, or no, meaning for us.

Jesus mentioned the coming of the Holy Spirit many times during His ministry; most of the time by way of prophetic description of His person, and especially His work.

Fifty days after the resurrection, ten days after the ascension, Christ's prophecies, and promises, were fulfilled; the Holy Spirit came in special measure, with special manifestations for the day, with special gifts for the day and the immediate future; but also with gifts for all time.

With that first Pentecost the Church was planted. The primacy of the Mosaic covenant was superseded. The distinctive mission of Judaism was at an end, its work was done. Instead of signs and symbols and prophetic utterances, the world was to have the very substance of all these things — Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit brought Jesus Christ home to the minds and hearts of men as His own visible presence and works had never done. This was God's plan.

Jesus had given His disciples a tremendously big task; that of evangelizing, of bringing Jesus Christ, as Savior, home to the heart of the world. It was then, as it is now, a task beyond any mere human power. They needed, as we need, power from on high. So the last request Jesus made of His disciples was that they remain in Jerusalem till the Father should send them the Holy Spirit.

This is the anniversary of this great event of nearly nineteen hundred years ago. It is still worthy of careful, prayerful, consideration; not only because of its past importance, but its present importance as well. We will take as our subject: The Abiding Gifts of Pentecost.

I.

The first great, all-inclusive abiding gift of Pentecost is the Holy Spirit Himself. Without wishing unduly to criticize, only to be helpful, it must be said that many professing Christians seem to know very little about the Holy Spirit. They are not in the same condition as the new converts at Ephesus, who, when asked whether they had received the Holy Spirit, replied: "Nay, we did not so much as hear whether there is a Holy Ghost." The Holy Spirit had been working on these people. Whatever they were, as Christians, was the result of the Holy Spirit's work. They simply had not heard anything about the details of His person, or work. This was in the

early day of wandering evangelists, when they, did not have time for many details. Worse than the ignorance of those first Ephesian converts is the lack of the power of the Spirit of God in the heart, the life.

When we speak about Pentecost, generally what are the first things of which most of us think? Is it not usually the unusual disturbance which sounded like the rush of a great wind through the branches of forest trees, the tongues like as of fire which stood on the Apostles' heads, and the ability given these men to speak different languages? After all, these were only symbolic, incidental things, accompanying the things of real, abiding importance. The first great thing, which made Pentecost, and of which we are to be reminded today, was the coming, to abide in and with the Church which was founded on this day, of the Holy Spirit Himself.

We do not mean to imply by this that the Church of the Old Testament was without the Holy Spirit. Indicative, in part at least, of the multiplicity of the Spirit's known operations in the Church of the Old Testament dispensation is the fact that the Holy Spirit was known to the prophets by at least eighteen different names. All we maintain is that, according to the evidence, the Holy Spirit never came in such measure, never with such manifestations of power, never with such blessed and far reaching results, never with such abiding results, as on the day of Pentecost.

We are not going to discuss here, either minutely, or at length, the difficult question of pure Godhead. No mortal can go very far here before he gets beyond his depth. But we do want to bear in mind, and Pentecost can have but little real meaning for us till we do bear steadfastly in mind, that the Holy Spirit is really God, the third person of the Godhead; that, being truly God, and not a mere divine influence, He came to do, what He was perfectly able to do, the work of God in man; especially to enlighten the mind, to change the heart, and move the will.

On Ascension Day we are reminded of the fact that it was necessary for the disciples, and, probably, for Christ Himself, to withdraw His visible presence from the world. He said, "It is expedient for you that I go away." While Jesus was here in such fashion that His disciples could go to Him, in the flesh, with their troubles and their wants, it seems, and it was perfectly natural, that they had leaned too much on Him as a wise man, and a friend. They had made some fine confessions concerning His nature and mission;

but it is evident, that, as is so frequently the case, their practice did not keep pace with their theory. The first time the disciples ever really worshiped Jesus Christ was when they had seen Him go into Heaven.

If man is to live aright, if he is to have a vision of the invisible, if he is to have a living faith in the unseen, if he is to have the sustaining power of a victorious life, he must have the consciousness of an abiding divine presence, an abiding divine favor, an abiding divine support; wholly divine. Men, probably, would largely have lost sight of this if Jesus, in the flesh had continued to live visibly and victoriously with men. To bring all this home to men was, in a general way, the purpose of the coming of the Holy Spirit. We should remember that the Holy Spirit's presence is an abiding one with the Church He founded, and with its individual members. In our text Jesus says to His disciples: "I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever." And He further says of this Spirit: "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." The fact that we are Christians at all; the fact that we believingly know Jesus Christ, that we are sure of having forgiveness, and of an heirship in heavenly things, and that we have visions of higher things to which we aspire, this is all a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and an evidence of His working in us. The absolute importance of the Spirit's abiding presence in our lives is seen when we recall that it is written: "No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Spirit."

Well may we join, then, in the prayer of the hymn:

Come, Holy Spirit, come;
Let Thy bright beams arise
Dispel the sorrow from our minds,
The darkness from our eyes.
Dwell, Spirit, in our hearts;
Our minds from bondage free;
Then shall we know, and praise, and love
The Father, Son, and Thee.

II.

The Holy Spirit came to abide with the Church. Like Jesus, in His day, the Holy Spirit has a special work to perform. Let us somewhat more definitely consider this work.

First of all, let us not forget that the third article of the Apostles' Creed is devoted to the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Luther, in his masterly explanation, gives one of the finest brief practical statements of the nature and necessity of the Holy Spirit's work that has ever been written. Let us recall it. It is worth repeating at least once a week as long as a man lives. Do not let the time come when any of you people must say, I have forgotten it. Here it is: "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith: even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers, and will at the last day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life."

Let us now think over some of the specific things which Jesus, in our text, and elsewhere, says the Holy Spirit was to do for His people. A favorite name for the Holy Spirit on the part of Jesus, as recorded by St. John, was Comforter. Every one understands this word comfort, comforter. It is a precious word; for all of us, sooner or later, stand badly in need of comfort. But I fear we have unnecessarily weakened the word. Most of us think of a comforter as a sympathetically inclined person, who feels for us in our hour of trouble, and speaks into our ear some nice words of fellow feeling, the chief benefit of which is to divert our thoughts from our grief, and to somewhat ease our pain by the assurance that some one else is sharing it with us. This is a real help. We all need it. No one need to be too proud to accept it. But this is not all that is contained in this fine word-Comforter. The Greek word from which our word comforter comes, originally meant one who was called to the side of another as his advocate in a court of justice. This, and much more, the Holy Spirit is to us. He is our advocate, He pleads our cause. He stands by us. In our weakness He gives us of His strength. In our lack of knowledge He gives us wisdom. He is our helper in every hour of need, our guide in every kind of perplexity. In all our religious needs and difficulties, the Holy Spirit is our source of help.

Let us hold fast to this precious word Comforter as applied to the Holy Spirit. There may be some who, at the present time, are inclined to smile at the word; they are in health, they feel strong and self-reliant, they have no

conscious need of comfort, but let us hold fast to the thought of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter; for some day, it may be soon, we will need it, and need it badly.

But even today, suppose we are in health, and have no material needs; how about our souls? Have we no consciousness of sin? Have we no memories that trouble us? Remember it is written: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” It is the Holy Spirit’s mission to make us see clearly, and to understand. He shows us sin, our sin, in all its hideous nature; with all its terrifying consequences. He reveals to us Christ Jesus as the only Savior from sin. He assures us of real forgiveness through Christ. He reminds us of the unfailing love of God in all our weaknesses. Yes, Comforter is His name. He comforts, not by doping conscience; but by leading us to, and applying to us, the real cure for all our ills — Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit has an office to perform with respect to the world itself. In the sixteenth chapter of St. John, Jesus, speaking of the specific work of the Holy Spirit, says: “He will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” Yes, even the world is in the great school of the Holy Spirit. It has not advanced very far, and, assuredly, not very fast. In this school most of us are more or less dullards. But the Holy Spirit, through the Church of God as His agent, has wrought a great change in many things in the economic, social, and moral life of the world itself.

There is still great room for improvement here, as there always will be till the kingdom of this world shall have become the Kingdom of God and His Christ. If many in the world today were asked what is the world’s great need, there would be many answers—new world markets, reform, new governmental policies, new political parties, or thorough cleansing and reorganization of the old. Many of these answers, all of them, in fact, may be true; but they do not go deep enough. Jesus says the world needs to be convicted by the Holy Spirit of the truth that sin, unrighteousness, is its greatest fault, as righteousness is its greatest need. The world, as such, is never going to learn these things in the true religious, spiritual sense; when it does it will cease to be the world, in distinction to the Kingdom of God. But, nevertheless, as in the past, so in the future, the world is learning, through the operation of the Spirit of God, to see and appreciate many of the external graces and virtues that have their seat and source of power in

the Kingdom of God. This is one of the tasks for the accomplishment of which the Holy Spirit has taken up His abiding presence in the world.

Practically all men have the conviction, more or less clear and firm, that not all things are definitely and forever settled when they have taken the form of action in human life here and now. Nearly all men, in their saner moments, feel that there is a day of final reckoning coming, that there is a bar of judgment, not ruled by human passions, where all things are going to be settled in accordance with the principle of inflexible and eternal justice. This is the voice of conscience within. It is supported by all manner of evidence in the world in which we live. Practically the only ones who deny this are those whose guilty consciences, seeking a way of escape, have taken some kind of an anodyne, which has practically destroyed the voice of the soul. To keep alive this faculty of the soul; to so keep alive, and accentuate, this consciousness of need; that men will seek, and find, the remedy for the need; and thus find peace, and strength, and glorious outlook, is one of the great purposes for which the Holy Spirit has come to abide in the world.

Again, in the sixteenth chapter of St. John, Jesus tells the disciples something the Holy Spirit is to do especially for them, and all believers. The words about convicting of sin, righteousness, and judgment were primarily for the world; though a progressive work along this line will be carried on continually in the lives of believers: but for the truly converted children of God, Jesus puts the mission of the Holy Spirit to them in these words: "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all truth."

In some sense, it must be granted that this promise had special significance for the Apostles. They had a special task. They were the revealers, and interpreters, of God's truth in a special sense. Without what they were commissioned and equipped to do, we would be utterly at a loss in many things. But so far as personal needs, and practical results, are concerned, this promise of Jesus about the work of the Holy Spirit is as much ours as it was the Apostles. As these men were led to know the truth, and enabled to proclaim that truth, as well as to put their trust in it for their own personal salvation; so the Holy Spirit is here, in Word and Sacrament, to give us an ever increasing understanding of God's truth. This truth is not absorbed from air or sunshine. This particular truth is not obtained from

books on science. It is recorded in God's Word, and the Holy Spirit is the only unfailing teacher. Here is the place where we really learn to know ourselves, to personally know Jesus Christ and how to be saved. And the Holy Spirit is always with the Word to lead us into its truths.

III.

The Holy Spirit came to abide with the Church as Comforter and Teacher. The biggest task is to make Jesus Christ Himself more real to men.

We are in danger, at times, I fear, of thinking of Pentecost as the time when the Holy Spirit came, in special manner and measure, to take the place of the ascended Jesus. This is the way to spiritual impoverishment, and not spiritual enrichment.

There are too many Christians who think of Jesus as the ascended, absent Savior; as the One who works only through the example He once gave as a legacy to the world. They think of Him entirely too much as One who speaks to us only through the words He spoke two thousand years ago, and works in us only through an energy once released. This is not in accordance with the testimony of Jesus concerning Himself.

In our text Jesus says, "I come unto you." This does not refer simply to Jesus' appearance after His resurrection. It does not refer only to His coming at the time of Judgment. It is in the present tense. Jesus says, I am coming unto you now, and unto the end of days.

Among the last words that Jesus spoke to His disciples were these ever memorable, ever precious ones: "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

Jesus' presence is not a visible one. We can neither see nor hear Him. But He is not merely present in power and influence. It is a real presence. It is a personal presence. The whole Savior is present with us. We must not allow our poor senses to confound the visible and the tangible with the real.

To know the abiding presence of Jesus, not only with this Church as a whole, but with each one of His believers; to know the indwelling Christ, the Christ who actually, but in incomprehensible manner, comes to make His home in our hearts; and thus in His own life becomes our life, our strength, our peace, our joy, this is the strong meat of the Gospel of the

Kingdom; but without it we shall ever be much like children who have just learned to begin to walk.

Jesus says the time will soon be here when the world shall see Me no more. They see Me now only with the eye of flesh, and they see only My flesh. When I am gone that will be the end of Me so far as they are concerned. Not so with you, ye shall still behold Me. Truly, with the eye of faith. But with that ye shall see Me better than the world ever saw Me when I was here in the flesh. In that day ye shall know Me as even ye never knew Me before. As never before ye shall know Me as God, one with the Father, in the Father. And in that day ye shall know that you are in Me, and that I am in you. Wondrous words! But let us not speculate. We do not need to do so. Those who have been on the mountain top with Jesus, those who have had closest experience with Him, know something of the blessed reality of all this; but no one can satisfactorily put the experience into words. This is the very soul of Christianity. This is the work of the Holy Spirit.

IV.

Pentecostal blessings! What are the conditions under which, and the means whereby, they come to us, and abide with us?

There are those who call themselves Pentecostal Christians. Rightly understood we are all Pentecostal Christians, or not Christians at all. We have been made Christians by the Holy Spirit, through the Word and Sacraments, or we are not Christians at all. If we claim to be Pentecostal Christians by virtue of some immediate and extraordinary gift of the Holy Spirit, we have very probably deceived ourselves. Some pray for a Pentecostal gift of the Holy Spirit, meaning thereby, evidently, some spectacular, and unmediated, gift of the Spirit. There is no warrant in the Scriptures for such expectation, at least not that we have been able to find, and no well authenticated instances in later history. But there is always room for a larger measure of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and plenty of room for more of the fruits of the Spirit, which is “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against which there is no law.”

Our text, and other Scripture, tells us how this may be prevented, or brought about. The Holy Spirit will not come, cannot come, into the heart

that is full of the spirit of the world. Fill a vessel and it is full. You cannot fill it with another substance. If we want the lusts of the world, we can have them; but we cannot, at the same time, have the Spirit of God, and the fruits of which He is the author.

Jesus says: "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." To keep Christ's commandments means more than just to obey them. It means to be in sympathy with them. It means to see the beauty, and the blessedness, of them. It means to see in them the expression of the heart as well as the will of the everlasting Father, and His Christ. Jesus says: If ye keep My commandments, and thus show your love for Me, My Father will love you, and I will love you, and manifest Myself to you. And the Holy Spirit will be our teacher. He will show us Christ's nearness. He will make Christ to be more and more a living reality in our lives. We will grow in grace. We will be continually growing stronger. Doubts will become less troublesome. Faith will become stronger. We will become more loving, and more lovable. Our fears will grow less, our joys will increase. The unseen realities will draw nearer, and more real. The peace of God will enfold our lives like a benediction.

How does this come about? Not by magic. Not through dreams, or hallucinations. Not by the multiplication of organizations, or external regulations. It all comes in God's set ways; through Word and sacraments. As we hear, as we read, as we meditate, as we worship, the fire burns; the Holy Spirit works, the dross is purged away, Christ comes in, and the good work goes on.

"How shall I quiet my heart? How shall I keep it still?
How shall I hush its tremulous start at tidings of good or ill?
How shall I gather and hold contentment and peace and rest?
Wrapping their sweetness, fold on fold, over my troubled breast?

"The Spirit of God is still, and gentle, and mild, and sweet
What time His Omnipotent, glorious will guideth the worlds at His feet;
Controlling all lesser things, this turbulent heart of mine,
He keepeth as under His folded wings in a peace serene, divine.

“So shall I quiet my heart, so shall I keep it still,
So shall I hush its tremulous start at tidings of good or ill;
So shall I silence my soul with a peacefulness deep and broad
So shall I gather divine control in the infinite quiet of God.”

Amen.

Trinity. Can We Still Believe In God?

The invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity.

ROMANS 1:20.

EVERY SUNDAY MORNING, in both Sunday-school, and church service, we stand up and make this confession: "I believe in God." Is this a fact, do we still believe in God? Can we, in this day of scientific knowledge, still believe in God? or is this just a relic of the infancy of the race, a bit of excess baggage, which, for sentimental reasons, we are loathe to discard; a kind of restraining element, a bogey man, to keep women and children in line?

I believe in God. If there is any rational basis for this confession, then it is the biggest thought that has ever entered the mind of man. Unquestionably this thought has had a greater controlling force in the upward urge of human life than any other that man has ever entertained. We would like to keep it, we believe it has a salutary influence. But, can we keep this confession and be honest men and women? Can we still make this confession, and look knowing people in the face, and not blush?

From what we read and hear in a good many quarters, no person who claims to be educated, especially scientifically educated, can any longer believe in God. And a good many people, who do not want to be considered old-fashioned, ignorant, or superstitious, are beginning to get uneasy, and are in danger of giving up their faith.

This is a very serious matter. It is a fundamental matter. If we cannot say any longer: "I believe in God," then the world is going to be an essentially different world from what it has been; then religion, as we have known it, is at an end. This is the reason I am going to discuss this morning, the question: Can we still believe in God?

I.

By way of preface, I want to say that, in this discussion, I am not going to make any particular appeal to Scripture. I have taken a text; that embodies my general line of thought; but I shall do little to explain or apply it.

Many of those, who are beginning to question whether we can still believe in God, would have little regard for a word of Scripture as a proof text. This is just one of the questions involved, is the Bible a trustworthy book?

For hundreds of years a conflict has been waged between science and religion. It is the claim of a good many that science has vanquished religion. This means, in the language of these people, that, if you are an educated person, especially a scientifically educated person, there is nothing left for you to believe; that the only believers are the ignorant, and the incurably superstitious. Of course, the first things to go into the discard, with such people, are God, and the Bible. In my judgment, the way to meet these people is on the ground of their own choosing. So my appeal, today, is going to be directly to known, and acknowledged, men of science. What do they say about God?

Another observation is in place. In quoting these scientists, I do not make myself responsible for all their views, theological or otherwise. All religion begins with a conception of God. Without this it is useless to go farther. It is impossible to go farther with any rational conception of life. The aim of my thesis this morning is to establish the rational basis of belief in God from what we know of the world, and of man; to show that, in the reasoned judgment of a large proportion of the world's best minds, scientifically trained, a rational view of the universe, and of man, demands the existence of God; a God infinite in knowledge and power.

II.

The first thing we are going to consider this morning is: What does nature, in the shape of the universe, have to say about God?

There was a time when the earth itself was to man largely unknown; it was to him immeasurably great; he thought of its distant parts, unexplored, unknown, with awe and dismay; which was only increased by his glimpses of the starry heavens above.

Today the earth has grown comparatively small. It is bound together with many lines of communication. With but a couple of relays, we can talk around the earth, by either telephone or radio. In the course of a few years, the airplane, in a few days, and with comparative safety, is going to fly around the earth. With television, which may be developed with the radio, as well as with the telephone, we may soon be able to see a man in India or Africa, as well as talk with him, from Europe, or America. Yes, science has made this earth of ours an increasingly small place. But this same science has made the universe infinitely larger, and more wonderful. It is a wonder of knowledge, not of ignorance and superstition.

There is scarcely a man or woman of intelligence living, who has not, at some time, perhaps many times, sat in the quiet hours of the night, looking, with ever growing wonder, up into the starry heavens. This feeling of wonder and amazement is increased if one occupies some point of vantage, like the deck of a boat in the midst of the great quiet ocean, the solitude of a mountain top, or the silence of a secluded desert. Even with the naked eye, and without instruments, if one watches the sky for consecutive nights, one can tell that there are stately movements going on among these heavenly bodies; for the various constellations are found in different places in the sky, and appear in relatively different forms, as the nights pass by. But it takes the scientist, with his specially trained knowledge, and his equipment, to reveal to us the secrets, and the real wonders, of the starry heavens.

This is the way Mr. Edwin B. Frost, who is declared to be one of the leading astronomers of the world, who has been the director of the Yerkes Observatory of the University of Chicago since 1905, a member of the Royal Astronomical Society, the National Academy of Sciences, and one time editor of the *Astrophysical Journal*, pictures the heavens into which we look. I am giving only the substance of his words.

The sight of an airplane is a common one these days. But we still wonder at it, and the speed with which it sails through the air. A hundred miles an hour is not an uncommon rate of speed. At this rate it would take about ten days to circle the earth at the equator. If the airplane could, in some way, be supplied with fuel, and could keep in continuous flight, in one hundred days, the daring navigator of the sky would reach the moon, the little dead brother of the earth. But then the journey would just be started. It would take one hundred and six years of continuous flight to reach the sun. It would take one thousand years to reach the planet Saturn; and three thousand years of ceaseless flight to reach Neptune, which, so far as is known, is on the outer edge of our solar system. This begins to stretch our powers of imagination a bit, does it not? But the story has but begun. If this imaginary navigator of the air should reach Neptune, and stop, at the end of his three thousand year jaunt, for a little rest, and exploration, it would then take him twenty-seven million years to pass through the empty, trackless space between Neptune and the nearest star neighbor, the system of Alpha Centauri.

Let us put it in another way. Light travels at the rate of one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles per second, eleven million miles per minute. It takes only five hundred seconds for light to pass from the sun to the earth, ninety-three million miles. It takes only a little more than four hours for light to pass from Neptune, at the outer edge of the solar system, to the earth.

In what they call a light year, that is, the distance light will travel in a year, light travels six million million miles; or six trillion miles. Now it takes light four and a third years to travel from the nearest known stars, which means that they are twenty-six trillion miles distant. The average distance of the stars visible through an ordinary telescope is such that it requires eight hundred years to reach the earth, traveling at the rate of one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles a second, for they are four quadrillion eight hundred trillion miles distant; and this is only the beginning of the story of distances in the starry world.

Now do not laugh at this. It is not a laughing matter. This is science. Science is the bible of a good many people. I see no reason for refusing to accept its conclusions in this field. Remember, these numbers and distances hold not only in one direction from the earth. The same inexplicable,

incomprehensible condition is found in space in every direction from the earth. When we look up into the sky it seems to be densely peopled with stars. In truth, there are a great many of them. It has been estimated that, seen and unseen, there are about fifteen hundred million of them. But the truth of the matter is that each of them is scattered in an immense ocean of space, most of them millions upon millions of miles apart.

All this, in itself, is incomprehensibly wonderful. But even this does not tell all the wonderful story. The members of the solar system, the sun, moon, planets are constantly in motion. They are following a prescribed, and invariable, course through space.

There are other systems of which this is true. And those who know most about these things tell us that there is much evidence which goes to show that all these systems of heavenly bodies, complicated in themselves, are revolving around some common, as yet undiscovered, center. In other words, the earth, instead of being the center of all things, as men once believed, or instead of the sun being the center of the universe, as astronomers once believed; our whole solar system, probably, is on the outer edge of a stupendous system of stars, and planets, and constellations, which simply staggers the imagination.

Here is another comparison that may be provocative of thought. The earth is, to all practical purposes, a hundred times smaller than it was five hundred years ago. But the earth is still a pretty large chunk of matter floating around through space; giving a home, opportunity for employment, and some pleasure, to many, many millions of inhabitants. After all it is only a speck in the universe, so far as bulk is concerned; one million earths like this could be put into the sun. Yet the size of the sun is less than that of the average star. And there are stars, like Betelgeuse and Antares, which are from thirty to forty million times the size of the sun. Wonderful as is the sun for brightness, there are stars which are very much brighter. Rigel, one of the stars in the constellation of Orion, would be ten thousand times as bright as the sun, if it was brought as near to the earth as is the sun.

Now let us go from what we may not inappropriately call, in the language of mortals, the infinitely great, to the infinitesimally small. If behind this, to the ordinary human mind, incomprehensible universe there should be a designing mind, and a guiding genius (you see I am, for the

present, leaving the question an open one), we might, it seems to me, very naturally suppose that a mind dealing with such stupendous problems might not be very much concerned with the very little things which make up this little speck we call the earth. What is the answer of science to this proposition?

Mr. Frost, in answer to this, says: "The laws of the universe apply equally to the almost infinitesimal parts, the molecule, and the atoms of which it is composed, as they do to the gigantic bodies which it includes. The marvelous experimental researches in physics of recent years have taught us that the atom is a very complicated structure, and that the electrons move within the atom somewhat as do the planets around the sun, and indeed with no greater crowding than occurs in the case of the planets; yet these inconceivably minute electrons follow the laws of the universe quite as truly as do the major structures."

This gentleman further tells us that there is a marvelous unity as to the composition of the universe. In the millions of suns that people space, we might expect to find a great diversity of elements. But there is no such variety, as the spectroscope reveals. The atom of hydrogen is the same throughout the universe, and is found in every self-luminous heavenly body yet observed. The same elements are found in all the stars. With only one or two minor exceptions, all the chemical elements found in the stars are found in the earth. It is still possible that this will be found on the earth. The sun, then, is chemically like the most distant stars; and the earth is chemically like the sun; and man, as to his body, is composed of the more common elements of the earth. Thus we may regard ourselves as samples of the whole universe.

Now with this little, blurred vision of the universe; yet opening up such vistas of glory that we are staggered in the contemplation, what shall we say as to how it all came to be? It seems to me the choice lies between two alternatives, either we must say, there is a purpose in it all, there is a supreme omniscient mind that conceived it, an omnipotent power that executed it; or we must say, it is all the result of chance, it just happened; it came from nowhere, it serves no purpose, it is all liable to crash into inextricable ruin at any time.

Comparatively few people in the world have ever been willing to accept this latter alternative. We Christian people would like to break out in the words of the Psalmist: “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handiwork”; or in the words of St. Paul: “The invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity.” But this will not do. I promised not to quote Scripture in proof of any position. What do scientists say about it? We are not going to deny that there have been some scientists, and there are now some, who are crass materialists; who believe that the universe is a mere machine that just happened, that there is no mind back of it, and no mind ruling it. But that is not the belief of the great majority of the greatest scientists that have ever lived. At this point I am going to quote only Mr. Frost, who is my authority for most of what I have said. I am going to quote his exact words. After describing the wonders of the universe, he says: “This, then, may give us some little idea of the modern findings as to the scale of God’s universe. Can anyone doubt that the recognition of the immense size and detail of the celestial universe must give to all who consider it a new and larger idea of the Cause behind it? There is no adequate evidence known to the writer that the universe is automatic, that it has within itself the power to make the laws which govern it. Mere matter cannot be imagined to be endowed with such capacity.” ...“Does not this give us a more spiritual view of the Author of the universe? It is so evidently ‘a house not made with hands’; it transcends so far anything that could be produced by any infinitely magnified model of the human form that we must recognize that only a spiritual power can lie behind it.”

III.

The next point we are going to consider is to raise the question whether there is anything in man, who is part of the world plan, to indicate, or necessitate, the existence of a supreme Divine Being?

Nothing entirely, or satisfactorily, explains the world in which man lives, which leaves unexplained the man who lives in the world. Man is not satisfactorily explained when you have analyzed, and catalogued, the elements of which his body is composed. When this has been done, you

have only told something about the house in which the real man lives; and very little about the man who lives in the house.

Man has a mind, he is self-conscious, he can think in abstract terms of abstract things.. Man has a consciousness that he is, essentially., a creature of what we may call two worlds. There: is that which identifies him, in part, with the material world in which he lives. There is that in man which lifts him immeasurably above the world of matter in which he lives. It is a far cry from a clod, or a mass which has not yet reached that consistency, and the minds of men who have produced such masterpieces as have Homer and Plato, Kant and Hegel, Dante and Milton. Even if most of us have not the masterly creative gift of these men of superlative genius, and others like unto them, many of us are at least able to think their thoughts after them.

In addition to mind, the thinking faculty, man has a moral consciousness; a something in him which differentiates between right and wrong; a monitor which would lead him to repudiate the wrong, and fight for, and; if need be, give his life for, the right; something which leads him to search for the truth, and place goodness above mere self-interest; something which gives him a spiritual understanding, and a moral enthusiasm.

Man is endowed with a specifically religious sense. In the minds and hearts of men throughout the world, there is a God-consciousness, a desire for God, a feeling of kinship to Him, a sense of dependence on Him. There are isolated instances where this consciousness has not emerged, or has been submerged; but this does not disprove the practically universal fact of its existence, any more than the fact that a few people are blind disproves the fact that most have eyes, and see with them.

Homer said: “As young birds open their mouths for food, so all men crave for the gods.” Before Homer, an Indian thinker as it is recorded in the Vedanta, said: “As the birds repair to the tree to dwell therein, so all the universe repairs to the supreme being.” Long before either of these, when the ancestors of both Greeks and Indians dwelt as a single people in central Asia, they had a word which meant “Heaven-Father.” This thing has persisted. There are those who maintain that in the course of time, and as scientific knowledge increases, men will outgrow these notions. But there is no evidence of it. It increases with the ages.

Man has a mind which far transcends the remainder of the animal world; he has a moral consciousness which no other part of the animal kingdom exhibits; but one of the very greatest of the distinguishing marks of man is his consciousness of personality. We know ourselves to be persons, beings with a union of powers and faculties that constitute us as entirely distinct from other persons. A person is a self-conscious, self-determining individual; one who is an end in himself; one who has a right to be himself. A person is one who, to realize his own best self, may sacrifice even himself for others; but must never be degraded into being the passive instrument of another's power, passion, or pleasure. This consciousness of personality, the great ideas of the value of the human soul, of the inherent equal worth of every man, have given the impulse to the world's greatest thought, and have exerted the most powerful influences in molding the modern world's best and most productive political and social policies. The modern world has been built on the principle of personality.

Now, in the language of the man in the street, we want to know how man got this way? How did man come to have a mind, a reflecting mind; a moral consciousness, a conscience; a God-consciousness; a consciousness of personality?

The materialist, the agnostic, the atheist, must maintain, and, in fact, does maintain, that man, the flower of all creation, the builder of empires, the author of philosophic systems like that of Aristotle, and Hegel, and Descartes; the fertile geniuses that have given to the world writings like that of Dante and Milton; the men who conceived and built the world's great poems in stone and marble; that all this came, by purest chance, out of dead matter, with no mind, no plan, no purpose.

The more we understand the immensity, and complexity, and beauty of the universe, the more difficult it is to believe that it is the result of chance. There are some things that are difficult in the Christian faith. It would, probably, not commend itself to us very strongly if it were not so. But what the materialist asks us to believe is a thousandfold more difficult to accept.

Shall a world of matter, without the semblance of a mind, produce a mind? Shall a world of matter, without the semblance of a conscience, produce a conscience? Shall a world without a conception of personality, produce this crowning thing of all life, a personality? Shall a world without

plan or purpose, without a God, produce a creature in many respects Godlike, with a God-consciousness, who aspires to Godlike things, who feels in the depths of his being a certain kinship to God? Shall we believe, I say, that a creature like this sprang up a sporadic thing of mere chance? To ask men to believe this seems to stultify every known law of the universe; and to run counter to every principle that prevails in the investigation of all other phenomena of the universe; that is, an adequate cause for every phenomenon.

There is a mechanistic theory of the universe whereby, in a way, all this is explained. But after all, it is an explanation which does not explain. It is impossible to explain mind, conscience, personality by a piece of machinery; especially so when the machine itself is not really accounted for. You can, however, explain a piece of machinery by mind. The only thing which really explains man is God. To have a satisfactory explanation for man you must postulate a mind capable of conceiving a creature like man, and with power to actually endow him with the actualities of that conception. We can reasonably account for man only by postulating an intelligent creative activity. This, we believe, is how we came to be what we are. This satisfactorily explains man's nature, his capacity for understanding something of God's nature and works, and of responding to God's guidance.

IV.

I am going to conclude by quoting what representative men, mostly men of science, have to say on this subject.

We have given you just a few thoughts about the world in which we live, and about the man who lives in the world, its chief visible occupant. It is all wonderful, inexpressibly wonderful. Some few have maintained that all this disproves the claims of Christianity. However, the greater number of great thinkers maintain that the wonders of the universe, and of man, give us a higher conception of the nature of God, and His handiwork,-that in all nature we see the trailing robe of the glory of the unseen God.

It may be interesting to note that, quite recently, a questionnaire presented to a large number of our secular colleges and universities, where religious belief is no requirement, revealed the fact that about eighty per cent of all the professors claimed to be Christian believers. This is worth

considering by those who are inclined to think that all educated men are unbelievers and that to belong to the aristocracy of intellect one must be, at least, an agnostic.

Huxley, who died only a little more than thirty years ago, a man who was given the highest honors of scientific England, who was the head and leader of what came to be known as the Agnostic School, was not an agnostic in theology. He did not hesitate to declare his faith in a Divine Power, to which he could trust himself, and the world, with full confidence.

Hugh Miller, the great Scotch geologist, who wrote: "The Testimony of the Rocks," and: "The Footprints of the Creator"; two works which will always remain classics of science; closes his article: "The Pledge Science Gives to Hope," with these words: "In looking along the long line of being, - ever rising in the scale from higher to yet higher manifestations, or abroad on the lower animals whom instinct never deceives, — can we hold that man, immeasurably higher in his place; and infinitely higher in his hopes and aspirations than all that ever went before him, should be, notwithstanding the one grand error in creation, the one painful worker in the midst of present trouble for a state into which he is never to enter, — the befooled expectant of a happy future which he is never to see? Assuredly no. He who keeps faith with all His humbler creatures, — who gives to even the bee and the dormouse the winter for which they prepare, — will to a certainty not break faith with man."

Mr. Alfred Noyes, a moderate English evolutionist, recently published the following in the London Spectator: "The fact is that in recent years, in every department of thought, we have been following a diminishing road which eventually runs out into nothingness. Science in direct defiance of its own first axiom has everywhere been explaining the greater by the less. Darwin's theory of evolution in almost every detail seems to be true as far as it goes, but it omits by far the greatest factor in the process. No theory of evolution has explained anything. At one end of the process we have a cloud of gas and at the other end Westminster Abbey with all that it implies, and we say that all this has grown up out of the action and reaction of the chemical elements in that original cloud of gas without any deeper power moving through and inspiring the process.

“The highest that we know here—indeed, the only reality of which we have immediate knowledge—is that of personality. Science claims that human personality is more and more controlling nature. Supreme personality, we may therefore suppose, would have supreme control in every detail. The Highest Reality of all, in which all the explanations reside, if the human intellect were capable of discovering them, cannot be less than personal. We cannot identify God with a universe in which nothing is self-sufficient, or its own explanation. Behind all these contingent shadow shows we are driven at last by inexorable logic to that which is its own explanation, and is sufficient to itself and all that it has produced. When we ask what the attributes of that Being must be, we are forced to believe that they are above reason and beyond nature as it is known to science. What is this, after all, but the supernatural Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible, of whom the Nicene Creed tells us, and whom St. Augustine found, not in the discourses of the Platonists, but in the voice of the Supreme Personality, infinite in perfection, speaking to what was highest in his own personality, and saying, ‘Come unto me’?”

Professor Robert A. Millikan, graduate of Oberlin College, a student of Columbia University, also of the universities Goettingen, Berlin, and Dublin; with a Ph. D. from Goettingen; for years a teacher of science in the University of Chicago; now Director of the Norman Bridge Laboratory of Physics and Chemistry in the California Institute of Technology; who is known as a physicist of the first rank; a few years ago the winner of the Noble Prize; this man, quite recently, wrote a paper entitled: A Scientist Confesses His Faith.

After an introduction, in which the author tells of the age-long conflict between religion and science, and deploring the fact, mentions, what he considers, some of the mistakes of theologians; and then has this to say: "But I am not going to place the whole blame for the existence of this controversy upon misguided leaders of religion. The responsibility is a divided one, for science is just as often misrepresented as is religion by men of little vision, of no appreciation of its limitations, and of imperfect comprehension of the real role which it plays in human life—by men who lose sight of all spiritual values and therefore exert an influence upon youth which is unsettling, irreligious, and essentially immoral. I am ready to admit that it is quite as much because of the existence of scientists of that

type as of their counterparts in the field of religion, that the 'Fundamental' controversy has flared up today, and it is high time that scientists recognize their share of the responsibility and take such steps as they can to remove their share of the cause.

"The first fact which seems to me altogether obvious and undisputed by thoughtful men is that there is actually no conflict whatever between science and religion when each is correctly understood. The simplest and probably the most convincing proof of the truth of that statement is found in the testimony of the greatest minds who have been leaders in the field of science, upon the one hand, and in the field of religion upon the other. Suppose, for example, that we select the greatest names in the last two centuries of the history of British sciences, or, for that matter, of world science. Every one would agree that the stars that shine brightest in that history, as one's glance sweeps down from 1650 to 1920, are found in the names of Newton, Faraday, Maxwell, Kelvin, and Raleigh. No more earnest seekers after truth, no intellects of more penetrating vision, can be found anywhere, at any time, than these, and yet every one of them has been a devout and professed follower of religion.

"If some one says that I am calling only on the testimony of physicists and of Englishmen, then listen to the man whom the French nation has repeatedly voted the foremost of all Frenchmen, and who is also easily the peer of any biologist who has ever lived anywhere, Louis Pasteur, of whom his biographer says, 'Finally, let it be remembered that Pasteur was a deeply religious man.' Over his tomb in the Institute Pasteur are inscribed these words of his:"Happy is he who carries a God within him, an ideal of beauty to which he is obedient—an ideal of art, an ideal of science, an ideal of the fatherland, an ideal of the virtues of the gospel.

"Or, again, if I am accused of calling merely on the testimony of the past, on the thinking which preceded the advent of this new twentieth century in which we live, I can bring the evidence strictly up to date by asking you to name the dozen most outstanding scientists in America today and then showing you that the great majority of them will bear testimony, not only to the complete lack of antagonism between the fields of science and religion, but to their own fundamental religious convictions. One naturally begins with the man who occupies the most conspicuous scientific position in the United States, namely, the president of the National

Academy of Sciences, who is at present both the head of the Smithsonian Institution of Washington and the president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Dr. Charles D. Walcott, one of the foremost of American students of the evolution of life in the early geologic ages. He is personally known to me to be a man of deep religious conviction and has recently written me that he be described for the purpose of this address, which he has seen, as an 'active church worker.'

"The same is true of Henry Fairfield Osborn, the director of the American Museum of Natural History of New York, and one of the foremost exponents of evolution in the country. Another rival for eminence in this field is Edwin G. Conklin of Princeton, who in recently published articles has definitely shown himself a proponent of the religious interpretation of life. In the same category I know, also from direct correspondence, that I may place John C. Merriam, president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington and America's foremost paleontologist; Michael Pupin, the very first of our electrical experts who has 'approved every word' of this address and recently delivered a better one at Columbia University on this same subject; John M. Coulter, dean of American botanists; A. A. and W. A. Noyes, foremost among our chemists; James R. Angell, president of Yale University, an eminent psychologist, with whom I have had an exchange of letters on this subject; James H. Breasted, our most eminent archeologist, who served with me for years on the board of trustees of a Chicago church, upon which also T. C. Chamberlin, dean of American geologists, was a constant attendant; Dr. C. G. Abbott, Home Secretary of the National Academy of Sciences, eminent astronomer and active churchman; and so on through the list of the scientists of special eminence in this country.

"Another obvious fact is that every one who reflects at all believes in one way or another in God. From my point of view, the word atheism is generally used most carelessly, unscientifically, and unintelligently, for it is to me unthinkable that a real atheist should exist at all. I may not, indeed, believe in the conception of deity possessed by the Congo negro who pounds the tom-tom to drive away the god whose presence and influence he fears; ...but it seems to me as obvious as breathing that every man who is sufficiently in his senses to recognize his own inability to comprehend the problem of existence, to understand whence he himself came and whither

he is going, must in the very admission of that ignorance and finiteness recognize the existence of a Something, a Power, a Being in whom and because of whom he himself 'lives and moves and has his being.' That Power, that Something, that Existence, we call God.

"Without attempting, then, to go farther in defining what in the nature of the case is undefinable, let me reassert my conviction that although you may not believe in some particular conception of God which I may try to give expression to, and although it is unquestionably true that many of our conceptions are sometimes childishly anthropomorphic, every one who is sufficiently in possession of his faculties to recognize his own inability to comprehend the problem of existence, bows his head in the presence of the Nature, if you will, the God, I prefer to say, who is behind it all, and whose attributes are partially revealed to us in it all, so that it pains me as much as it did Kelvin 'to hear crudely atheistic views expressed by men who have never known the deeper side of existence.' Let me then henceforth use the word God to describe that which is behind the mystery of existence and that which gives meaning to it. I think you will not misunderstand me, then, when I say that I have never known a thinking man who did not believe in God.

"If there be a man who does not believe, either through the promptings of his religious faith or through the objective evidence which the evolutionary history of the world offers, in a progressive revelation of God to man, if there be a man who in neither of these two ways has come to feel that there is a meaning to and a purpose for existence, if there be such thorough-going pessimism in this world, then may I and mine be kept as far as possible from contact with it. If the beauty, the meaning and the purpose of this life as revealed by both science and religion are all a dream, then let me dream on forever." Amen.

Trinity. What We Believe About God.

But the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

And when they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.

And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth.

Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

MATTHEW 28:16-20.

LAST SUNDAY we discussed the question: Can we still believe in God? We did not attempt to answer the question by appeal to Scripture. The Bible is authoritative for us. But right here lies one of our major problems. A good many people, especially younger people, have gotten the idea, from a certain class of people, that the Bible itself is an old-fashioned book, wholly out-of-date. Because of this I went directly to authoritative men of science, to those men who are supposed by many to speak infallibly; from these men, the best minds in the scientific world, of the past, and the present, we showed that belief in God is reasonable. Indeed, from the very words of these men themselves, we showed that the world itself, if it is to

be an intelligible world; and man himself, if he is not to be the world's greatest conundrum; demands a God.

I would believe in God if all the scientists in the world were of a different mind. I am independent enough to follow what seems to me to be reasonable, if I follow that path alone. But I am really gratified when the best minds of the ages stand up and say: The foundation of your religion is scientifically safe; science, for most of us, leads straight to God. This pronouncement pleases me because, according to the best human standards available among men, I am not intellectually a fool when I stand up, and reverently say: "I believe in God."

This means much. It means that, both from the point of view of science and Scripture, our foundation is safe. The Bible says there is a God. The best science, at least many of the best minds in the scientific world, says—there must be a God. This is much, but it is by no means enough. Science, on the part of a good many, goes a little further; it says that, judging by the evidence available, God must be a wonderful being; wonderful in His wisdom and power. But this is not enough. Science, true science, does not attempt to go beyond this. And it leaves us in an unsatisfied state of mind. One of the big questions, one of the pressing questions, concerning God, on the part of those who are really interested, is: What kind of being is God? What is His disposition toward men? Is there any kind of personal relationship between God and the children of men? Does God really care for men?

We are going to answer some of these questions this morning while we discuss this subject: What We Believe about God.

God Is Knowable

The first thing about which we must be satisfied, if our religion is to be worth anything, is that God is knowable, that He has revealed Himself so that men may know Him. There are those who do not seriously question God's existence, who do question whether man can know anything worthwhile about Him; who believe that, having made the world, God has hid Himself away in the impenetrable mists. To believe this leaves man but little better off than if he did not know that there is a God. Of a large part of the children of men it is true, as the Psalmist says: "My heart and my flesh

cry out unto the living God.” Man wants to know, not only that there is a God; but what kind of God He is, what He thinks about us, and what He has done, and is doing, for us.

There is something in the heart of man, almost universally, that says: We are God’s children; a personal relationship exists between Him and us; He put us here for a purpose; He created this wonderful world for our good; assuredly He would not leave us to wander in perpetual darkness, and wear our hearts out with useless yearning. There is abundant evidence that the heart of man is right. God has written two volumes for our instruction. One is the book of nature, the other is the book of Revelation. The book of nature tells us much about God, even as the scientist tells us. Doctor Russell, Professor of Astronomy at Princeton University, says, in his book, *Fate and Freedom*, that, in his judgment, it is absolutely impossible for the mind of man to conceive an idea of God that, in any way, conveys adequate conception of God’s greatness, His power, His glory. St. Paul tells us that “the invisible things of God since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and, divinity.” Science and Revelation unite, then, in telling us that the book of nature has a message for us about God. The message is perfect. The trouble is with our human limitations. We are now able to read the message only very imperfectly. But it means very much to a man when he learns that everything in the universe, everything with which he comes in contact, has God’s autograph written all over it.

Fortunately, we are not confined to the book of nature for our knowledge of God. Nor to our knowledge of man, whose life is another page in the book of nature. For those who want to know God intimately, He has given another book, the book of Revelation. Here, down through the ages, by revelations, by contacts, by experiences, men have written down what God has made known to them of Himself. Here all that man can know, all that man needs to know, about God is recorded. Personally I do not believe that even the Bible tells us all about God. That would mean that within the limitations of human language, and human understanding, the infinite God has been confined. But all that human thought can grasp, even the composite of all human minds; all that human language can convey, with all its elasticity; this we have recorded in the book of revelation. Sometimes the picture of God, as it has been painted by so many artists, through so

many ages, seems to be somewhat distorted by the limitations of human language and powers of expression; sometimes the picture seems to be blurred by the infiltration of human passions and modes of thought. But take the picture, of God as it is drawn, in great outline, in the Bible; behold Him in His greatness, His majesty, His ineffable glory; see Him in the sweep of His knowledge and power; bask in the infiniteness of His love, His mercy, His tender-heartedness; stand in awe of His holiness, His righteousness, and His justice; put all this, and, of course, much more in the picture of your personal God; and if God Himself is not the author of this picture, as well as the subject of it; then the human mind that conceived this picture of God ought to be God. In all the field of philosophy, in all the realm of literature, in all the dreams of art, there is nothing like it. It stands alone. It must stand alone, there is nothing like it; this is God.

The last word has not yet been said. We are not left to the expedient of going through the Bible, picking out an attribute of God here, and another there, and putting them together; we get something of our idea of God in this way. But there is something better. God has come down out of the clouds. He has disengaged Himself from the tangle of mere words. God became incarnate. God, full, complete God, has lived an historic life among men. And men have observed, and recorded, this life. Its matchless beauty, its heaven-born superiority, the all-inclusiveness of its love and mercy, are admitted by all. This is Jesus Christ. This is my God. Here is where I start in my study of God. Here is where I find the mind and heart of God. Here is God's last, and greatest, revelation of Himself to the waiting minds and hearts of mankind.

Just a word of advice and warning. The word of advice is this: form an idea, a mental picture, for yourself, of God. In my judgment, one reason God is such a shadowy, unsubstantial being to so many people is that they have never taken the trouble to form a settled mental, and heart, picture of God. To start with, God is a Spirit. He is like our thinking, willing, feeling, loving self, if these were disengaged from our bodies; which, in its present state, probably hinders these things more than it helps them. God is a person, just as we are, each one of us, a person. God is a person limitless in knowledge, measureless in power, boundless in His love and mercy, holy and just. He is going to do right by us as expressed in terms of love, of grace. Of course, there is much more than this, some of which may

profitably be used. But with what has been mentioned, I have a fair nucleus for my working knowledge of God. I cannot define God in terms of His essence. I cannot locate God with any known instruments. But I know many of God's working qualities. I recognize that these qualities in God remind me of myself; only that in God these qualities are magnified to infinity, while in me they are very limited and imperfect. I find that these qualities were found perfectly in Jesus Christ. This is the way I build up my picture of God. Of course, it is imperfect; my working instruments are imperfect. But I am perfectly satisfied that I am on the right road. All the arguments of men and devils shall not shake my faith.

My word of warning is this: Recognize your limitations. Do not say that God is not, or that He is not this, that, or the other thing, because you cannot measure Him by the little yardstick of your mind. And do not blame the trouble on God. It is in you. We recognize our limitations in other directions. Suppose a circle the circumference of the earth, twenty-five thousand miles, were set up in front us. That is only an infinitesimally small thing, as distances and sizes go, in this universe. But small as it is, we would have to take in, and examine, this circle a little segment at a time. So it is, only multiplied millions of times, with our knowledge of God. We can look only at one little spot at a time. We cannot understand even that perfectly. You are examining one little point today, and I another; we are both looking at God, but we are seeing what appears to be different objects. It is the same God. In a million years I may come to see what you see today. My point is, let us recognize our limitations. When we come to think of it seriously, we would not want it otherwise. Why should we refuse to believe in God because we cannot completely understand God? Why should we demand to understand all about God, when we cannot understand our neighbor, or ourselves? Honestly, now, would you want a God that you could fully grasp with your mind? How much bigger, better could He be than yourself? How much could He do for you in your hour of need? This God who has told me all about Himself that I can understand, and more; this God who has revealed Himself to me in Jesus Christ, this God meets all my needs. With this I am going to be satisfied.

A God Who Is One In Three

One of the truths the Christian Church has always felt that it was important men should discern and affirm is what the Church calls the doctrine of the Trinity. To this I agree; though I do not agree that it is at all necessary for ordinary Christians to follow the hairsplitting theology, and philosophy, by which it has been felt necessary to define these truths. For myself, I feel much better satisfied just to follow the simple statements of the Master, without bothering much about the how, or the wherefore.

One of the great steps in advance of Judaism was the discovery or acceptance of the revelation, that there is but one God. Everywhere the prevailing old world religions were largely built on the idea of a multiplicity of gods. Indeed, practically a different god for every major activity in nature; a separate god for each human interest. It was given to Judaism to rise above the idea of tribal gods, to enthrone Jehovah in their hearts as God alone. The faith of Israel was: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." This is the ultimate truth as to the unity of God. On this foundation Christianity is built. The only advance it could make was in the understanding of the person and nature of God. The Confession of the Christian as to the oneness of God is: "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Science comes along in these latter days and declares that what the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments say about the oneness of God is correct. Professor Henry Norris Russell says that all that science reveals of God in His works makes it imperative that we believe in the unity of His being. In the same breath, however, with which the authors of Scripture proclaim that God is One, one in all His attributes, one in all that makes Him God; with that same breath I say, they proclaim that God exists in three persons. Evidently they do not mean that, at different times, and for different purposes, God appeared in different forms. The simple, natural meaning of the words in which the truth is presented is that the God who is one in His essence, in all that makes Him God, exists at the same time in three distinct persons. That is evidently what Jesus Himself seems to imply when, in our text, He commands that all disciples of His be baptized, not in the name of three Gods; but in the names of the three persons existing in indivisible essence: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I am not going to crack my head over the difficulty. I do not see any contradiction in the statement. I take it that it is as clear as daylight to Jesus

Christ, who spoke these words. Some of these days, if it will be of any advantage to me, I will understand them. Just now it is a matter that is a little beyond my metaphysics, and my psychology.

God Is A Father

In our text Jesus says God is a father. That is a familiar Biblical expression. He is a father, not only to Jesus Christ; but to all men; in a special sense to all those who own Him father. Here I am beginning to stand on somewhat familiar ground. Even human fatherhood, and motherhood, has an element of the inexplicable, only fools will not see it. But here we begin to get our bearings. We know something of what fatherhood involves. Some things that the Scriptures, and even science, tell me about God stretch away, and away, and away into either the infinitely large, or the infinitesimally small, as you choose. It is all wonderful, staggeringly wonderful, no doubt. But my human mind just naturally does not stretch that far. But when we get to talking about fatherhood, I feel that I know a little something about it. We know something about the sacrifice, the love, the solicitude, that is bound up in that word father. We know something of the going out of heart to heart that fatherhood and childhood implies. We know that the best things in all this world have been built up by the operation of what is implied in the term fatherhood. Why should not the best in the universe everywhere be built up, and operate, on the basis of fatherhood?

Here is something of which I can get hold. Whatever else God is He is a father; a father to every one of us. He is the author of our being. On that basis, He will never fail us. If we turn from Him, as human children sometimes turn from their natural parents, God will take the loss, but it will be with a bleeding heart. If we act like children, if we trust, and love, and serve, as children we have a God who is a father, with all the wealth of a father's devotion. Do we need anything more? Why do we not take the simple and easily grasped, and let the mysteries, the things beyond our reach, take care of themselves?

There is one picture of fatherhood in the Bible that has gripped me beyond anything of kindred nature. It is the picture of the father of the prodigal son. He never forgets. He never ceases to love. He always keeps a room, and a garment ready. When the son comes home, influenced beyond

doubt by the father's prayers, the father sees his boy a great way off, for he is watching for him, has been all the while; goes to meet him, embraces him, in spite of his rags and filth; and provides for all his needs. This is intended to be, do not forget it, a picture of God, of His relationship to us, of His attitude toward us. These are the truths that put the foundation under our feet; and conviction into our hearts; and not our futile struggling to explain the unexplainable.

God The Son

The second person of the Godhead is known as the Son of God. This is a familiar expression to all readers of the New Testament. Jesus Christ, who was born at Bethlehem, reared at Nazareth, crucified at Jerusalem, and went back to Heaven from Olivet, is the One to whom the Scriptures refer when they speak of the Son of God. When the Bible speaks about sonship I am on somewhat familiar ground. I know that a son implies a father, as a father implies a child. Fatherhood implies a certain responsibility for the being of the child. I take it that, in some very real sense, this is what is meant when the everlasting God is called the Father of Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ His Son. This in itself involves no difficulties that are apparent to my mind. I understand it also when the Bible speaks of Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God. This means that Jesus Christ was the only Son God ever had who was God, in all respects like the Father. But when the record speaks of the Son as being eternally begotten, I do not know what it means. Eternal we generally define as endless, without beginning, without end. Begotten means to have a beginning. I cannot explain it. I take it that a real fact in the life of God is expressed by the term eternally begotten; and that the difficulty arises in the attempt to express a divine truth in the concepts and language of mortals. But why perplex our minds? Why conjure up distressing difficulties? Why foster brooding doubts? Jesus Christ was here on the earth. He had an historic life. He justified all His claims for Himself, all Heaven's claims for Him. In His own person Jesus Christ meets every possible real need of the human heart, the human life. I pin my faith, primarily, on the known, the demonstrated, the experienced. In view of what I know, I think I can allow what I do not know to take care of itself, while I carry it as part of the body of my implicit faith, awaiting interpretations, or further revelations.

We must not forget that it is a part of our Biblical and Christian faith that the Son of God, who has always been the Son of God, in the course of history, took unto Himself a full, true human life. In this sense He became our full brother, sharing everything with us save participation in our imperfections, though He did share the penalty of it with us, relieving us of the greater, and more dreadful, share.

It is also a record of history, and an article of our faith, that Jesus kept His human nature; that it is an inseparable part of Himself, that it shares in all the powers and prerogatives of His Deity. In this we have a foregleam of our own coming glorified state; for we shall be like Him.

The Holy Spirit

The third member of the family of Deity is called the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit also, it is evidently the intention of the Scriptures to make clear, is not merely an influence, or power, proceeding from God; but one of the distinct persons of the Godhead; fully, truly, eternally God. The Holy Spirit is pictured in Scripture as the procreative, recreative member of the Godhead. It was by the Holy Spirit's intervention that Jesus was conceived; by Him all God's twice-born children are spiritually reborn. He it is by whose guidance and controlling influence we are kept in the faith. When anyone falls by the way, through unbelief, or viciousness of life, it is because he has done despite to the mothering, nurturing Spirit of God.

God And Salvation

Our text, in which Jesus states the fact of there being three persons in the Godhead, is primarily practical. These are the last recorded words of Jesus' earthly life. They have as their background the activity of Jesus' whole earthly life. The substance of it all is God's effort to win men for His Kingdom. This is the character of the whole Bible. It is extremely practical. There is much statement of Heaven-high facts and principles. But they are, in the main, only the necessary clarifications of the fundamentals of the program that is being described. There is some theorizing, but it is the theorizing of man about the things of which he has caught glimpses. God deals with facts, and among the most fundamental of these facts is this, there is a God. There is no formal treatise anywhere in the Bible on the

nature of God. By gathering up statements here and there, we paint our picture of Him. It is right that we should do so. But the Bible is an epic of God's love. The note that rings clear, unmistakable, throughout the Bible is the clearest revelation of Him who is Himself God's greatest revelation: "God so loved the world." All the Bible is but a series of variations on this theme, telling what this necessitated, and how it was carried out. The simple conclusion of the story is that God has left nothing undone that man's good demanded. God's heart prompted it all. God's mind conceived it all; God's Son, our brother, the God-man, not separated from, but in cooperation with the Father, has carried out the plan that God's mind and heart conceived; the Holy Spirit, not in isolation, but in cooperation with the Father and the Son, seeks to apply, and make effective, what the Father conceived, and the Son executed. God has established a Church wherein, and means whereby, all the blessings of this God-wrought salvation are applied individually to us. God is desirous, very desirous, that all men should become recipients of these blessings.

This, in brief, is my line of thought: There is a God. The human heart says there ought to be a God. The Scripture affirms that there is a God. And the best science corroborates the Bible affirmation that there is a God. This God, in all essentials, is a knowable God. This God is One. If He were not one, He would not be God. But this God, one in all that makes Him God, not only manifested Himself, but evidently exists, in three persons: One known as the Father, One known as the Son, One known as the Holy Spirit. This God loves me, as He loves all people. This God has done all that even God can do to secure my present and eternal welfare, and He has left a record of all this. This God is working ceaselessly, day and night, to make His already accomplished work effective in my life, and yours.

This, necessarily brief, and more or less imperfect, outline is what I have in the background of my mind, and the settled conviction of my heart, when I say: "I believe in God."

Now just a word in conclusion. Let us act in religion as sensible people act in other things. It is a saying hoary with age that we can judge a tree by its fruit. Let us judge the Christian religion by its principles, and its results. Let us not fix our eyes on the difficulties connected with the existence, nature, and work of God so intently that we cannot see anything else. There are difficulties. Only a fool will deny it. Only a fool would expect it to be

otherwise. I am not saying that people should shut their eyes to these difficulties, and not wrestle with them. But it is possible to so hold a copper before the eyes that you shut out the sun. He who would do this would not be wise in declaring that there is no sun.

Let us take things as they are. Let us take that of which we can take hold. Let us weigh the unanswerable evidence we have. When you are hungry you do not wait to obtain a complete chemical knowledge of the elements of bread and meat, of their relations to each other, and the needs of your body. You simply know what these things have been doing for countless millions of people, and you eat. Most of us never do know much about these things, though, in the main, they are quite knowable. Let us act on the same common sense plane about God and Christianity. Stripped of all misunderstandings, is there anything in all the realm of human thought so sublimely wonderful, so transcendently beautiful, so gloriously attractive, so stimulating, so quickening of all that is best in human life, as the picture which nature and the inspired Word gives of God? especially as He is revealed in the Gospels in the face of Jesus Christ? If there is anything show it to me, and I will follow it.

Is there anything on all the pages of history that has produced the same results in human life as this same doctrine of God in Jesus Christ? Anything that makes life so worthwhile? Anything that so fires life with worthwhile aspirations? Anything that so transforms the life, and feeds the sustaining fires of endeavor? We know the objections that are voiced against this. We know how slow human life is to respond to the idealism of Jesus' life, and Jesus' teaching. But the simple fact is that it is responding, and the change is much as that between day and night. We know also about the failures of those who call themselves Christians. Yes, we know the weaknesses, the conflicting passions, the insistent passions of humans. We know also the propensity of those who are without the spirit of Christ to mistake their own sinister passions for the spirit of Christ, and the propensity of those who are without any such delusion to bask in the reflected light of the Christ and His Church. But in spite of all this, and as things are, it is the most natural, the most inevitable thing in the world; in spite of all this, I say, I repeat the challenge: Where, in all the world, is there anything which has done, and is doing, in the realm of the eternally worthwhile, what God, in Christ, has

done? Show it to me. I want to investigate it. I shall follow where truth leads.

The best that the world knows is involved in the Christian doctrine of God. I follow the best, that is the reason I stand up before the Church, and all the world and say, and am not ashamed to say: I believe in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ His Son. I believe in the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Anniversary of Dedication Builders.

I purpose to build a house for the name of Jehovah my God.

1 KINGS 5:5.

But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon.

For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

But if any man buildeth on the foundation gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble;

Each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is.

1 COR. 3:10-13.

THIS IS A DAY of blessed memories. Our thoughts run back through the years to the busy day when this church was being built. Every one was busy, and full of expectation. We were all anxious to see the work completed. We wanted to enter into the use and enjoyment of the work of our hands.

At last the long desired day came. Our work was completed. We were ready to dedicate. Our friends came to rejoice with us. The day of dedication was a high festival day. There was the joy of accomplishment, the joy of worship, the joy of the prospect of the years before us in which we could meet in God's House to worship Him in the beauty of holiness.

It is now nineteen years since this church was first dedicated. So great was the joy and benefit of the day of dedication that we resolved to observe the anniversary of it from year to year, — that we might keep alive the joy of accomplishment, the joy of God's continual presence and blessing on us, as a congregation, and as individuals. It is because of this that we are assembled here this morning.

In part, of course, our work was completed when we dedicated. The building was complete. The furniture was in place. The committees in charge of the various phases of the work were ready to be discharged. But the greater task was not completed, and never will be, till the end of days. So, today, it is proper, and profitable, to think not only of the finished task behind us, but also of the unfinished task before us. So I am going to take for my subject a single word which covers the past, the present, and the future. That word is—Builders.

Builders of churches, builders of congregations, builders of the temple of individual human life.

I.

Let us think briefly of men as church builders.

Men have always been builders. There is something in man which naturally impels him to want to build. He wants to express himself. He wants to see his ideas, and his ideals, take on tangible shape, for purposes of utility and beauty.

From the beginning, much of man's greatest, and most splendid, efforts, in the line of construction, have been directed toward building for religious purposes. The first thing that was ever built, so far as we know, was an altar for worship. Among the earliest, and most pretentious, buildings men ever erected, most of them were temples for the worship of God.

Our first little text tells us about the plan for building the first permanent house of worship erected in the name, and to the glory, of the true God, — the temple in Jerusalem. David, you will remember, wanted to build it. His reasoning was fine. He said it was not a becoming thing for men, even a king like himself, to live in a substantial, comfortable, beautiful home; while God's house, the place of worship, was but a tent, the worse for age

and wear. There is something wrong with the spirituality of the people who have and enjoy fine homes, fine furnishings of every kind, but are willing to worship in any kind of shabby place. But David was not permitted to build the temple. He was a ruler, a soldier, by force of circumstances, a man of war. The building of the temple did become one of the notable events of the reign of Solomon, David's son. He had thousands of workmen up in the Lebanon mountains getting out the timber and stone to be used in constructing the temple.

I was in the quarry, right under the hills of Jerusalem, where much, if not all, the stone was obtained for the superstructure of the temple. You may still observe there the marks of the craft, and something of their methods of work. The workmen who got out this stone were such masters of their trade that when the stones were brought out, the builders of the temple did not need any kind of shaping instrument when they put the stones in place. Everything was perfect.

In many places in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Greece, you may still see the work of stone masons, who did their work two thousand years ago, and some of them three thousand, or more, years ago, and it is remarkably accurate; in many instances far in advance of anything we find today.

Splendid as was the work on the temple, splendid as the temple itself was in its completed state; it is gone. There is not one stone left in place. The saddest moments I had in the East, and in Europe, were those when I sat by the shattered ruins of ancient temples, and ancient cities, of which there are left only splendid fragments, and, in some instances, few of these; and thought of the busy, ambitious, people who built these wonders, then moved on, their work in ruins, their very names forgotten.

In the golden age of Caesar Augustus, a wealthy Roman, Piso by name, built himself a mansion. He dug the foundations deep. He built his house of the best stone obtainable from the Alban hills. When it was completed, Piso beheld his palace with admiration; and had chiseled into the arch of the doorway these words: "Piso Builds For Ever." How proudly sound these words: "Piso Builds For Ever." But what has happened? Today there is scarcely one stone on top of another. And lying apart, still legible, and speaking, as if in mockery of its author, is the arch of the doorway, with its proud inscription: "Piso Builds For Ever."

So it is with all things human. We may build for a generation, for a century, for a millennium. But all the while the structure is in process of decay. Under the effect of heat and cold, of rain and ice, the stone slowly crumbles to pieces, metals corrode, and other materials decay.

We have had, and will continue to have, illustrations of this right here in our own building. Fire cost us almost a hundred thousand dollars, including furnishings, and instruments. And ever and anon repairs and improvements of one kind or another need to be made. It is a common example of the effect of the gnawing tooth of time. All this should help teach us a great, and much needed, lesson. This lesson is that building homes, and churches, or any other buildings made of stone, or brick, or wood, however necessary and commendable, should not represent our chief building program. Such buildings are necessary. In helping to build them we may be doing God's work. But it is not our highest task.

II.

Builders of congregations. Let us build churches; let us not be extravagant; but let us make them as substantial and beautiful as we can. But a program much more important is that of building congregations.

Why do we build churches? Let me answer this question by asking another. Why do we ordinary mortals build homes? Many people spend most of a lifetime of effort, and self-sacrifice, in building a home. What is the object? The element of display enters largely with some people. When I was in Egypt, I was told that, occasionally, when an Egyptian becomes unexpectedly wealthy, he builds himself a nice modern house, with modern appointments, and then continues to live in his thatched hut, and shows off his new house, as a prized possession, much as we show a prized antique, or a costly trinket. To build for comfort, convenience, and the nurture of the sense of the beautiful, within reason, is certainly permissible. But the main idea, with nearly every one, is a home; a shelter, a refuge, a place of nurture and training for ourselves, and those we love. The home is the place to which we flee from the conflict and strain of the outside world, to rest from our burdens, to gather new courage and strength for the other conflicts that are sure to come. Unless a home serves this purpose, unless it makes a contribution to life, it is not the place it ought to be.

This, in a still higher sense, is the reason we build churches. Surely they are not merely show places at which to look. The church, of all structures, is built for use. It is built for a specific purpose, to be a home for a family of God's people. The church is a training school for God's children, a barracks for God's soldiers, a treasure house for God's workmen, a refuge for the weary and oppressed, a lighthouse for those lost and tossed on the stormy sea of life, a power house for all of God's children. In the church is the place where we learn the real meaning of life; the place where we learn that life is not mere drudgery; that the highest thing in life is not merely to learn how to perform, acceptably, certain material, and more or less temporary, tasks; but the place where we learn how to live, how to develop and beautify life, until one of these days we shall graduate, and get our diploma, which will admit us into the ranks of God's full grown children.

This being true, it ought to be very evident that our church buildings are only a means to an end, that they have but one legitimate object, to serve the purpose for which a congregation exists, the building up of a family of God's children. A place where God's children get ideas, and ideals, and inspiration, which will affect the home, the community, the school, the state, and all for good.

The Church is the spiritual home of a spiritual family. While it should by no means be the only place, the Church is the place where God's family comes to worship. Here we come with our spiritual burdens to lay them down at the Master's feet. Here we come with the perplexities for which the world has no satisfactory answer, and, even if we do not find the detailed answers we would like to have, probably because, in our blindness, we cannot perceive or appreciate them, we do get the courage, and the strength, which comes from the assurance that we are in the hands of an infinite wisdom, and an infinite love. Here we come to get the mastery of ourselves, the calmness, the self-possession, and the strength, which comes from the consciousness that our lives are intimately, and indissolubly, linked up, with the perfect calmness, and the perfect and inexhaustible strength of Jesus Christ, our brother, and our God. Here is where we come, with all boldness and confidence, to Christ to have the poison of sin counteracted and extracted; to have the guilt of past mistakes washed away; and to have the mantle of the perfect righteousness of Christ's righteousness thrown over the sores and the scars which disfigure our lives.

To the Church we come, then, to enter into the closest possible fellowship with God through His incarnate Son. To the Church we come to have fellowship, the highest and sweetest fellowship, that earth can afford, with God's other children, our brethren in the faith. To the Church we come to get the clearest visions, and the sweetest foretastes, of that undisturbed, and unbroken, fellowship of God's redeemed children, with God and each other, that is to be in the perfect world, and the perfect life.

Is it not clear from this that our chief concern in church building, and, church maintenance, is not the church building; but the family which the building shelters; the family of God's children which in the church finds its center of activity? No dedicatory service, no anniversary of a service of dedication, is complete, then, without reference to this higher task.

We thank the Lord for this church building. We thank Him that He enabled us to build it, that He has preserved it to us, that He enables us to support it. It is not a marvel of architecture like the great cathedrals of the old world, or such as they are building in our land. It is substantial like the people who built it. It is comfortable and serviceable. It is nearly paid for. But our big work is still in progress. That task is the building of the congregation.

There are two ways in which a congregation may be built up. As far as possible, as long as possible, a congregation is to be built up numerically. I hope no congregation builds a church with the idea that it is simply for the exclusive use of those who build it. They build it for all who can be won for it. Every church stands as a missionary institution. The church building itself, with its open doors, is a standing invitation to all who know of it to enter its portals, and enjoy its blessings; to know the Savior who is preached there, and enjoy His rich gifts. Every church building stands as a declaration of every member that belongs to it that the Church of God is the place where every human being should have his home, and draw his help and inspiration. Every church we build is a pledge, written in wood and stone, that we will do all we can to get every man, woman and child, who is without the blessings of Christ, to identify himself, or herself, with the church. Remember, this is not the pledge merely of the minister, the deacons, the Sunday-school teachers; it is the pledge, the God-imposed pledge, of every member. Have we all done our duty, are we now doing our duty, in this respect?

The building of the church, as the body of believers, can go on, and should go on, even if there is not a soul that can be won from the world to Christ. The Scriptures speak, again and again, of edifying the church, that is, its members; that means, building them up; yes, those who are already Christians. And it shows that what it means by this is that they are to keep on growing, in knowledge, in faith, in love for God, in love for their fellowmen. In other words, this means that, through Word and Sacrament, they are to keep on becoming bigger, better, more effectual, in their Christian lives, and their Christian living. Our anniversary service today is not going to be all it should be if we do not resolve, anew, to do all we can to make our church a growing one in both senses.

III.

Builders of the temple of our own individual lives.

We build a church because God's family needs it. We build a congregation because we are prompted thereto both by Christ's command and the need of souls, our own, and others. But a congregation is built up in spiritual things only as each person is a builder of his own individual spiritual life.

Builders! Friends, what are you building? A house? Fine, but do not stop there, — build a home, a real home. Did you help to build a church? Were you interested in its erection? Did you help to pay for it, are you helping maintain it? That is fine, too; but do not stop there. The church's real worth is not in its walls, but in its people. Are you helping to build up the congregation? Are you a soul winner? Are you really an Andrew, a Philip, trying to lead some one to meet, and know, Jesus? Are you interested in the program of building up the congregation, in knowledge, in faith, in love, in Christian service? Are you actively interested in seeing the body of Christian people to which you belong become, increasingly, a more ideal family of God's people? That, too, is fine. But do we recognize, brethren, that, in the family circle, and in the congregational circle, the group advances only as the individuals composing the group advance? The family group is just as strong as a group, as the average strength of the individual members of the group. The congregation is just as spiritual, just as faithful,

just as strong, just as effectual in its mission, as is the average spiritual capacity, and activity, of the members composing the congregation.

Is it not clear, then, that the first big task of each Christian, who would help build up the Church of God, is to build up his own Christian life? This is a familiar thought in the Bible, and in all Christian literature. I think it is one of the finest thoughts of which a person can get hold, or that can get hold of him.

“We are builders, and each one
Must cut and carve as best he can;
Every life is but a stone,
Every one must carve his own;
Make, or mar, must every man.”

Builders of the temple of life! Builders of the temple beautiful! Builders of the temple that is to go on growing in perfection and beauty when all our church buildings have gone down in ruins, when the pyramids have crumbled into dust, and the stars have burned out. This is the temple of your life, and mine. Let us catch the meaning, the spirit, the worthwhileness of this fundamental thought. It should dominate all our thinking; it should be the underlying principle of all our activity. It is the very thing of which St. Paul speaks in our second text.

It is no wonder St. Paul says: “Let each man take heed how he buildeth.” We are building for the endless ages. We must therefore be careful of the material we put into the building of life. Hay and straw have some value, because they have some use; but you would not use them in a beautiful building that was to stand for countless centuries. You might use them for a thatch on a rather temporary shelter, as is often done. But even then they present elements of danger; a little dry weather, and the touch of a spark, and you have a conflagration. How careful we should be of the material we are putting into the building of life!

In building the temple of life, as in building anything else that is worthwhile, we must begin right. If you are going to build a chicken coop, or a hutch, you do not need to bother much about a foundation. But any kind of a pretentious, and permanent, house demands a foundation; deep,

broad, substantial in proportion to the value, and durability, of the building you are going to erect on it.

What is your life worth? How long do you expect it to last? Is it something that can be made a thing of beauty, and a joy forever? God says so. Your own soul bears testimony that it is so. Then it should have a good foundation; a foundation that will last; a foundation that will bear all the superstructure you can build upon it. St. Paul tells us this foundation is Jesus Christ. Our lives must not only rest on Him, they must be rooted in Him. Living in vital touch with Him the currents of His life cleanse our lives; and they vitalize our lives. It is Christ who shows us how worthwhile life is, how beautiful it may become; and how, progressively, to realize these ideals.

“Piso builds for ever.” Not when he was building that palace of stone and mortar. But Piso could have built for eternity. You and I, who are the newborn children of God, whose sins are forgiven and in whom, through faith, there moves the life of the Son of God, are building for eternity. The thing that makes this life of ours so wonderful, worth so much, to God and ourselves, is not its endless duration. I would not want to live forever standing like a dead tree on a hillside; or like a tenantless house in a deserted village. The thing that makes the thought of eternal life not only enduring, but wonderful, enticing, is the idea of its fullness, its richness, its infinite variety, its beauty, its glory, its possibility of infinite happiness, and endless service in God’s great world plan.

Brethren, rest assured, present experiences are proving it, the only life with which this is possible is the life of whole souled goodness. Character is what endures. Earthquakes cannot shatter it. Fires cannot burn it. The eternal ages cannot wither it. For all the ages the life of goodness, and I mean this in the true, Gospel sense, bears on its brow the dew of eternal youth.

This is what I mean by being builders of life, our own individual life. It is the life that is growing in the sunlight of God’s grace; that is drawing its inspiration and its power, from the fountain of the life of God, revealed in His Word. It is the life that is in rapport with the ideals of St. Paul: “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely,

whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” This is the life that has the mind of Christ. This is the life that is growing more beautiful every day. This is the life that is sipping more, and still more, of the cup of real happiness; that is losing more, and still more, of its fears; that is growing stronger to dare and to do in any and every noble adventure; that is growing calmer, more self-possessed, every day. This kind of life never grows old. It is just ripening, in sunshine and shadow, in frost and heat, for the perfect life in the perfect world.

Builders! I like this word. A builder! I like this little phrase. They both indicate the outward, and the upward, look; they indicate ideas and ideals; they indicate strength and the use of strength; they indicate hope, progress, growth. Brethren, let us be builders. Let us get it into our souls to be real builders. Let us put the best that is in us into all that we build. Let us help along every real building project. Let us help build God’s house. It represents God’s abiding place with us. It is the center of all divine activities, the earthly power house of divine energy. Let us help build the Christian congregation. It is the recipient, and the transmitter, of God’s power for all human betterment. In this earth, in all moral and spiritual programs, God works through human agencies. To be a builder for God, in any effective way, I must first build my own life. Let us not just purpose to build a house for God in our lives. God wants to do it. He wants to start right now. Let us cooperate with Him. Let us make the building of life, the strengthening of life, the beautifying of life, the supreme purpose of our living. Amen.

Harvest Festival. An Acceptable Harvest Festival Service.

Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion;
And unto thee shall the vow be performed.
Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it,
Thou greatly enrichest it;
The river of God is full of water:
Thou providest them grain, when thou hast so prepared the earth.
Thou waterest its furrows abundantly;
Thou settlest the ridges thereof:
Thou makest it soft with showers;
Thou blessest the springing thereof.
Thou crownest the year with thy goodness;
And thy paths drop fatness.
They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness;
And the hills are girded with joy.
The pastures are clothed with flocks;
The valleys also are covered over with grain;
They shout for joy, they also sing.

PSALM 65. 1:9-13.

THE TIME OF INGATHERING has come. The sound of the reaper has been heard in the land. The harvest season is largely past. The husbandman soon will be standing by well-filled bins and garner. May his joy be that of the worker together with God. Even the city dwellers, denied the smell of clean, freshly turned, earth; the sweet aroma of ripening grain, and drying hay, and clustering fruit; will have an added sense of security, and well-being, because of the fruitful harvest gathered in from field and gardens, from tree and vine, by the tillers of the soil.

But even the city dweller need not be entirely excluded from participation in the Harvest Festival service. We must not think too narrowly about these things. Humanity is one big family. The husbandman produces the supplies for basic human needs, food and clothing. But the city dweller, in these modern days, plays his part in the scheme of things. He, very largely, provides the implements with which the husbandman works. Even so far as foods are concerned, the man in town and city, to a large extent, takes the raw materials, and prepares them for use.

It is just as appropriate that those Christians in the city should have an annual Harvest Festival service as it is for those in the country. I think this is a service no Christian should fail to observe. Let us think of it as a service in which we are reminded, in a special way, of the bounteous provision God has made for our physical needs.

Let us take as the subject of our sermon this morning: An Acceptable Harvest Festival Service.

I.

The idea of a Harvest Festival is a very ancient one.

From the earliest times of which we have any record, men have recognized a very close relationship between nature and God, and the bounties of nature and the goodness of God. The first sons of the first parents of whom we have any record felt impelled, at the sight of ripened grain and teeming herds, to take the first fruits of their fields and their flocks, and present them as a thank-offering unto the Lord. The Harvest Festival, then, in some form, is as old as the race. It is deeply rooted in the religious life of mankind.

The Harvest Festival was one of the stated services of the ancient Jewish Church, and owed its place to God's own ordination. The time and manner of conducting these services were specifically stated. This was one of their high festival services. Whether crops were scant, or especially bountiful, made little difference; the Harvest Festival was a day when the knee was bowed before the Lord Jehovah, and the voice of acknowledgment and thanksgiving was raised.

We have no such specific directions in the New Testament Church. It is not required that we keep such a day at all. But the obligation is upon us none the less. When the great Son of man, and Son of God, walked with men, matters pertaining to the harvest were of constant interest to Him. The vineyard and the vine, plowing and planting, the harvests of earth as well as the harvests of Heaven, and God in it all, and over it all, were familiar, as well as loved topics. The same processes in nature are in operation now as then. We understand them better than the people in general did two thousand years ago, but it is still evident that they are of God. How like the breath of the morning, how like what we imagine the very heart of nature is saying, are the words of the Psalmist in our text:

“Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it,
Thou greatly enrichest it;
The river of God is full of water:
Thou providest them grain, when thou halt so prepared the earth.
Thou waterest its furrows abundantly,
Thou settlest the ridges thereof:
Thou makest it soft with showers;
Thou blessest the springing thereof.
Thou crownest the year with thy goodness;
And thy paths drop fatness.
They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness;
And the hills are girded with joy.
The pastures are clothed with flocks;
The valleys also are covered over with grain;
They shout for joy, they also sing.”

II.

A Harvest Festival can be observed aright, ordinarily at least, only when the worshipper sees in the Harvest Gift a little something of himself.

God Almighty is the world's great worker. His great Son looked out into the world with beaming eyes, and said: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” This vast universe, from the farthest star to the tiniest atom, is one vast piece of mechanism. At its center, with His hand on the throttle, and Himself furnishing the energy for it all, sits the great Author and Mover of

it all. For every being, from Jesus Christ, the great Co-author, and mover, of it all, down to the least and the lowliest of God's creatures, there is a place, and a work, for every one.

There is no place in God's plan for the sluggard. Few more suggestive descriptions of the lazy man have ever been written than that of the ancient penman: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which, having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelth, and thy want as an armed man." A person like this can never enter devoutly into a Harvest Festival service. See what God hath wrought! This thought, this feeling, lies at the bottom of all worship. But in the case of the Harvest Festival, and kindred things, this thought also lies close, Behold what God has enabled me to do! By diligence, by intelligent use of what God has put to my hand, I have been enabled to become a cooperating factor in the productive scheme of things.

Necessary to a proper participation in a Harvest Festival service, one must have an upright mind. The husbandman who thinks only of how many bushels of grain he can get to grow on an acre of ground, and of how many pennies he can extract from a needy public above the cost of production; the manufacturer who thinks only of how cheap he can get his labor, of how much he can get for his product, even to the extent of a shoddy product and a manipulated market, and knows nothing but to gloat over the accumulation of profits; the laborer who thinks only of how little work he can do in a given number of hours, and of how big a wage he can extract from his employer; none of these can ever take an honest and devout part in a Harvest Festival service. The grain, the vegetables, the fruits we see before us; and we could just as well have the products of our shops, and the articles of our handicraft; all of these represent the operation of known, and exact, laws. Law, at least the law of God, in nature, and revelation, speak eloquently of justice, of honesty, of impartiality. Only those with clean hands, and a pure heart, in this respect, can worship God aright, at a Harvest Festival, or any other time.

But even this is not all. Those who would worship God aright must not only be workers, honest workers, workers together with God; but they must

be workers with some idea of service.

Who, with any imagination, or feeling, that has ever beheld a wide expanse of country, laden with waving fields of ripening grain of every description; far-spreading orchards, with the boughs of the trees bending low under their burden of fruit, tinted with such colors as only the Master Artist can paint, and tinctured with all the spices of Araby; to this add all the other contribution a bounteous nature makes to the profit and the pleasure of the children of men; who I say, has not wondered at all this, and said: How good, how loving, the Author of all this; beyond a peradventure, it was designed as a service to mankind.

Now, we have seen, man is a coworker with God. He is to be not a mere mechanical, but an intelligent, cooperator with God. Man reaches his highest plane of cooperation when he cooperates not only in production, but in the purpose of production. The really noble workman does not work only to make a living; he works that he may live and play a man's part in God's great scheme, which is an altogether different thing.

The most sordid and deadening thing in all the world of human activity is for a man to work just to pile up a mass of dead things, which he calls his treasures. This is when work becomes slavery. The slave driver, in this case, is a dead something that has no voice, and no feeling. It is when men begin to look upon work as a contribution that is made to life, not only its continuance, but its betterment, its happiness, its unfolding, that human work enters into the sphere of creative activity. When a man begins to see that his labor, however humble, if necessary, is contributing to the welfare of his family, the community, the nation, yes, the Kingdom of God, then it is that labor takes on a real dignity, and the laborer bears the title of God's nobility. This man has a necessary preparation for observing a true Harvest Festival service.

III.

Before anyone can take a proper part in a Harvest Festival service, he must see beyond the human worker, and the earthly gift, to the great Giver of the gift.

We know much more about nature than did the ancients. As a result, the world has lost some of its superstition, and idolatry. ' We do not see a

separate divinity presiding over every stream, every field of grain, every fruit-bearing tree. In place of this we see everywhere the operation of laws which are pretty well defined. But this does not do away with the necessity of God. Indeed, science has revealed a world which makes a transcendent, personal God all the more imperative. In every tree which, bending under its burden, smiles back at mankind; in every stock of grain reproducing itself a hundred-fold; and in a hundred other things we meet every day, there is something no science has entirely explained.

There is but one thing that solves the problem which the harvest moon presents to every thoughtful observer. It is contained in the subject of the first verse of our text, and in the pronoun of the remainder of it. There is a personal intelligence, a personal power, a personal concern for His creatures back of all this material manifestation.

“Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Zion,
And unto Thee shall the vow be performed.
Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it;
Thou greatly enrichest it.
Thou providest them grain.
Thou crowest the year with Thy goodness;
Thy paths drop fatness.”

How much more satisfying is the Psalmist’s explanation of the harvest phenomenon than all the scientific data in the world, or any statistical enumeration of the products of our fields and orchards.

The Harvest Festival reminds us, in a material way, that there is no variableness in God’s goodness; it is the same from generation to generation. The dewdrops in autumn are not so numerous as the mercies of our God. The stars that twinkle in the blue sky after nightfall are not so many as the blessings which crown the year of God’s goodness. Our openhearted, open-handed, Heavenly Father hath led us, and fed us, and anticipated our needs.

A Harvest Festival, with the Church appropriately garlanded with the varied fruits of field and orchard and garden, is a special reminder of the daily evidence of God’s solicitous fatherhood. Millenniums have passed, and left their record on the pages of history; untold generations of men have

appeared on the stage of human activity, played their part, and passed away; and God has never failed to do His part. There are times when, here and there, storm, and drought, and disease, and depredation, destroy the fruits of the earth, and of man's labors. But always the earth has produced enough so that if men were brothers, and really workers together with God, there was an abundance for all. So the things we can see are a convincing evidence of the everlasting goodness of God. This should be an effectual antidote against useless worry. We may be tried. Indeed, sooner or later, in one way or another, we will all be tried; we need discipline; but we will never be forsaken.

This is a Harvest Festival service. By it we are led to think especially of material good things. Many who know nothing else, would probably feel this appeal. But can we, who are God's spiritual children, think of these things and not be reminded of things still more precious? Can He who provides food for me when I am hungry, who performs such wonders for my good and my delight, will He fail to provide for my deeper wants; will this God ever fail to provide for the hunger of my mind, and my heart? Will He who guides the sun and the stars in their devious courses; will He who is the law that paints the rose, and distills the elements that put the fragrance into the carnation; will He ever fail to provide the deeper wants of my inner life, of which He is the author? We know the answer from the great Book. We believe that. But right from the fields, and trees, and growing things, we have visible confirmation of all this.

IV.

We have contemplated the great Giver, and His great gift. What effect should it have on our lives?

A number of emotions should be stirred in the Christian's breast by a Harvest Festival service, but there is one that is not always felt,-a certain pronounced sense of insufficiency in the presence of God's wonders, and a consequent feeling of humility. The very opposite of this is too frequently the case. Instead of a sense of humility, many people are unduly elated; especially if the efforts with which they have been associated have been successful; they act as if they made the sun to rise. and warm the earth, as if they caused the rain to fall, as if they put the fructifying power in seed and

earth. always humble. The wise man, the devout man, is He is a worker with God, an intelligent, diligent worker; but he recognizes his limitations, and the very earth he touches, and the fruits of the earth, are holy with the presence of God, whose power and goodness, he sees, but cannot explain. This humbleness leads to repentance and confession.

The Christian man and woman, with a mind wise with Christian wisdom; one whose actions are prompted by a devout heart, does not estimate God's material gifts too lightly. The grain he gathers from the field, the vegetables he pulls from the earth, the fruit he plucks from the tree, they are all gifts of God; gifts of grace. He receives them as a steward. He knows that he must give an account of his use of them. As gifts of God he cannot waste them, and he cannot use them foolishly. All these things are given to further God's plans for His children. On the other hand, the wise steward does not estimate these material gifts too highly; they profit only the body, and only indirectly affect the mind and heart. The cup of water only reminds us of the cup of salvation, the bread of the wheat only reminds us of the bread for the soul. These material gifts are to awaken the soul, not put it to sleep; they are to remind us of God and His goodness, not take the place of God.

The Harvest Festival calls especially for wholehearted thanksgiving; not merely as a matter of momentary sentiment, but as a holy duty. We owe this to God. A kind of thanksgiving is comparatively easy when the granary is piled high, and the larder overflows. But when the blight has dwarfed the grain, and the drought has withered the garden, many of those who at other times thought they were thankful, have a long face, and their voice is full of complaint. Let us beware of the seat of the grumblers. What does all this activity in nature, and among men, mean? Surely not just to see how many bushels of grain we can pile up, or how many hogs we can raise. This is all just a little part of the program of life, human life. Life is the thing of importance. The hard days are just a part of the perfectly balanced program, a certain kind of discipline, just as the good days are a part of the discipline, and, in some respects, a more trying kind. We are living, that is the chief thing. If we practice economy and thrift, we will have enough on which to live. Let us thank God that we are alive, it is of His mercy; and that we have enough on which to live. God has not forsaken us. His angels encamp round about them that fear Him. "Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,

and His mercy endureth forever.” Let us trust God, and not complain, but give thanks.

Thanksgiving is not complete, till we have anew, and more completely, dedicated ourselves to the service of Him whom we thank; dedicated ourselves not only to a Sunday service, but a week-day, a continual, service. He serves God but poorly who sings hymns only on Sunday. The spirit of the hymn must be in my heart, in my hands and my feet, when I go to my task on Monday. When I go to the service on Sunday, and hear, and sing, and pray with an understandingly devout heart, the food I eat on Monday comes near to being sacramental, and the tasks I perform during the week are themselves parts of a great service of praise. Day by day, in the Church on Sunday, in the field and kitchen, and shop during the week, we shall be drawing, daily, into more intimate and blessed fellowship with our God.

“Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Zion;
And unto thee shall the vow be performed.
Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it,
Thou greatly enrichest it;
Thou providest them grain, when Thou hast so prepared the earth.
Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness;
And Thy paths drop fatness.
And the hills are girded with joy.
The pastures are clothed with flocks;
The valleys also are covered over with grain
They shout for joy, they also sing.”

Amen.

Mission Festival. Christ's Missionary Program.

They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?

And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority.

But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight:

ACTS 1:6-9.

SOMETIMES, not as often as should be the case, we hear church members talk about church matters. What are the usual subjects of conversation? Building a new church; improving the church property; paying the church debt; having a nice service that will attract the stranger; keeping up our schools, and other institutions, our orphanages, and old folks' homes; the success of the last social meeting, and planning for the next one. I do not believe that Jesus is indifferent to any of these things. They all have a place. But these are not the things Jesus talked about most of the time, they are not the things He stressed. They are not the things He tried to get His disciples to talk about. Jesus spoke much about the Kingdom of God, about sin and righteousness, about repentance and forgiveness, about faith and love, about salvation.

Church members, as a good many preachers, are very likely to speak chiefly about property and finance, even when they talk Church; Jesus talked about souls. We are inclined to talk about numbers, Jesus talked about values. We are very likely to deal with the present, Jesus dealt largely with the future as based on the present, and growing out of it. We are inclined to dwell on the things we can see and count and handle; Jesus spoke much about things of the heart,-sin, repentance, forgiveness, trust, love, peace; the transformed life these produce; and the eternal life in which they issue.

Sometimes, not as often as they should, pastors and Church members talk about missions. The time when you hear most on the subject is when the Church at large announces a missionary program, or a missionary offering. Then you hear all kinds of opinions. One dear old well meaning deacon says: I do not believe in missions. We have enough to do to keep our own work going. And an equally dear old sister in the amen corner says: It may be all right to help the people in our own country, if we can; but I do not believe in sending missionaries to foreign lands. What claims have these people in China, or Africa, or India, on us anyway? Another one says: I believe in helping decent, deserving people; but I do not believe in spending our good money in helping the derelicts and the outcast., who have never tried to help themselves.

What did Jesus say on the subject of missions? He never talked much about anything else. His missionary glance, and His missionary desire, went from the throne to the hovel and the prison; from the people of His own race to the man of Greek culture, of Roman energy, of Indian mysticism; but just as well to the dark-skinned Ethiopian, of lesser culture, or no culture. Jesus Christ is, professedly, our authoritative teacher; our leader; our Master, from whom we take directions. Today we want to consider some of Jesus' last recorded words. They are missionary words. And they give directions for the procedure of the Church in all ages. We will call it: *Christ's Missionary Program.*

Christ's missionary program! If I do not get anything else to stick, I hope this will stick: Jesus Christ has a missionary program. Our missionary program is not, primarily, mine, or yours; it is not the program of the Church at large; it is the program of Jesus Christ. It is ours because it is His. Our responsibility is to Him.

Steps Preparatory To Christ's Missionary Program

It always adds something to a narrative, on the part of thinking people, to know something of the background, the conditions under which it was spoken. In every great enterprise there is always some preliminary work which has to be done; some things which have to be cleared out of the way; some plans which have to be made.

It was after Gethsemane and Calvary. Jesus had died for the cause He had espoused. He had died to make men free. The seal of God had been put on Jesus' life, and on His death, by His resurrection. The day of Pentecost was near at hand. The Apostles had somewhat recovered from their fears. The repeated appearances of Jesus had assured them of the reality of His resurrection. They now had, unquestionably, increased assurance that Jesus, and His cause, were destined ultimately to triumph.

The Apostles, however, still lacked the Pentecostal vision, the Pentecostal spirit, the Pentecostal power. The Apostles were still Jews at heart, with their Jewish nationalistic ideas about Jewish rule. So they give expression, on this occasion of their last meeting to the thoughts uppermost in their minds: "Lord, dost Thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" Lord, your star seems to be in the ascendancy. You surely are destined to be a victor. In this hour, what are you going to do for your land, and your people? Are you going to drive out the enemy? Are you going to set up again the throne of our father David? Are you going to reclaim for us some of the honor once ours? Are you going to make us a power in the world?

And what is Jesus' reply? Jesus was a Jew. He claimed Jewish rights and privileges. But He was not a narrow Jewish partisan. He was the first citizen of the world. It was His aim, not to establish a national, sectarian, following; but a universal society. So He says to the Apostolic inquirers: "It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set in His own authority." This was a polite way of saying, and Jesus was always polite: Men, this question you have asked pertains to a matter which is really none of your business at this particular juncture in human history. This is a matter about which statesmen make cautious moves with great show of skill and learning; but which, in reality, the great Father holds in His own hand, and determines, as a matter of reward or punishment, as He

sees fit. You men, Jesus says, are called to a higher task. You are to be God's ambassadors to negotiate the terms of a world empire, not based on racial lines, or geographic boundaries; but on the ground of desire for God-likeness in life, and eternal salvation. And then Jesus gives men His program: "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: And ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth."

What we want to bear in mind as we proceed is, first of all, the character of the speaker. It is the Lord Jesus, to whom has been given all power in Heaven, and on earth. It is the risen, triumphant, glorified God-man. This command to Christianize the earth is His command. It is not that of St. Paul, or of Luther, or any minor official voicing the conclusion of the Church; to which, indeed, we should give respectful consideration. No, it is the voice of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Lord of Heaven and earth. Truly, if one wishes he can say: I am not interested in missions, I will not do any missionary work myself, and I will not give anything for missions. That is the privilege of anyone who wants to follow such a course. But let him bear in mind that he is not bucking the program of some preacher, congregation, or denominational body. That person is flatly disobeying the Lord Jesus. To Him, and Him alone, he will have to answer.

These disciples had seen much of Jesus, they had heard much from Him. Especially in these later days had they seen and heard much which was very unusual. But they were not yet qualified to be such missionaries as Jesus wanted, and needed. So Jesus says to these men: Remain right here in Jerusalem till you are endued with power from on high. It was not a matter of mere knowledge; these men needed something of this, but more; enlargement of heart, consecration of faculties, and transformation of character; everything that would make them more effectual as witnesses of Jesus.

Yes, witnesses of Jesus, this was their task. As we shall see, missionary work covers a wide field, it has many ramifications; but after all real missionary work narrows down to a very small compass. It is telling lost people about Jesus Christ, the world's only Savior. It matters not how great work may be done, how splendid it may be in appearance, how much it may benefit men in other ways of life, if it does not tell lost souls of a loving and all-sufficient Savior, it is not mission work after Christ's plan.

In these words of Jesus we have His missionary program. In the record according to St. Matthew only the extent of the program is indicated: The disciples were to go into all the world. Here the order of the program is indicated — Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the world.

The First Step In Christ's Missionary Program

God always does His work in an orderly, logical, systematic way. To the disciples, the first missionaries, Jesus said: "Begin at Jerusalem." They were to start at home. It would not be the proper thing for a father to leave his own family, the circle of nearer relatives, and friends, and their wants, and spend his time and means in ministering only to strangers. It would be just as strange to profess love for the souls in Polynesia, and indifferent to the needs of souls next door.

There are very few congregations that live up to the Christ-ideal. The master missionaries are few and far between, just as master men and women, in any line, are the exceptional ones. But there can be no question that the Christ-ideal is for every Christian always and everywhere to be a missionary; living one's life so it will be an invitation to accept Christianity; speaking a word for Christ when we have a chance. We ought not simply to say: Will you not join our Church? We have a nice class of people, and we have very little debt on our Church, and we have a fine choir. Christ should be emphasized, every man's need of Christ, and the fact that we preach only Christ.

Do we realize that on an average more than one-half of the men and women our Christian people meet in this country are outside the Church? This may not be true of our community. It may not be true of our city. It is true of our country at large. Nearly three out of five people are unchurched. What a chance to show them what a Christian is, to tell them what a Christian believes. What a chance to say a word for Christ, and His Church. And what a change could be made in these figures if every Christian did his duty.

You probably read the account, recently published, of one of our congregations in Pittsburgh. The pastor succeeded in getting just a baker's dozen of his people to do some extra work along this line. I say extra work. That is the way we regard it. It ought to be the Christian's regular work, just

as opportunity affords. By the end of the year they had brought a hundred members into the congregation. We think of this as something wonderful. It is quite unusual. It ought not to be so. This is just what all of us ought to be trying to do all the time. This is just what Jesus wants us to be doing. This is what many of the earnest early Christians did. Andrew hunted up Simon, and brought him to Jesus. Philip found Nathanael, told what he had found in Him, and invited him to come and see. On the day of Pentecost, many people were attracted by the manifestations taking place. Peter took advantage of the opportunity, told them about Jesus, pressed home their guilt, offered forgiveness and life, and right there in Jerusalem, which had crucified Jesus, gathered in a harvest of three thousand souls. And when the people of Jerusalem, who had become Christians, were persecuted, and scattered about, as they went they preached Christ and made new converts. When a man is a living Christian; when Christ is a reality to him, when he has experienced forgiveness and the new life, he cannot help being a missionary. He does not need to be noisy. He does not attempt to make a show. He is not aggressively argumentative. These types often get on people's nerves. But wherever he can, the real Christian speaks a word for Christ.

All forms of earnest, honest mission work are pleasing unto the Lord. But of all work of this kind I think that done by the private individual Christian for another person, prompted only by love for Christ, and the soul He seeks, is the most pleasing. It is the most natural missionary work in the world. It is prompted by the purest motives.

When we do work of this kind, we are not working just for good Church statistics, we are not working just to swell the congregational roll. We are working for the love of Christ. We are working to save souls. But such work does strengthen the home base. It lengthens the arm of Christ just so much for His work. It releases just so much money power, mind power, heart power, for work in the Kingdom of God.

Beginning at Jerusalem, at home, among their relatives and acquaintances; that was the way the first Church did by direct command of the Lord Jesus. That was the natural way to begin. But these men did not confine themselves to people of their own class or their own race. Soon they were branching out; they had widows, and orphans, foreigners, and other needy ones of whom to take care; and with the Gospel they preached

by word of mouth, they brought the fruits of the Gospel in their own lives, in the shape of food, clothing, nursing, medicine. I am quite sure that these earliest Christian missionaries did not turn aside from, but turned to, with special tenderness, the outcast, the fallen, the derelicts of society. Jesus did this in His own life. The last man to speak to Him, and to whom He spoke before His death was the penitent thief on the cross. The early Church was painstakingly careful in its ministrations to those who, so often, are the victims of the social order, of ignorance, and the sins of others as much as their own.

Every Christian in whose heart the Christ is enshrined, and in whose life His life is reproduced, has a tender heart, and a helping hand, for the unfortunate, in fortune, or in life. Every Christian, and every Christian congregation, everywhere, but especially in the larger centers of population, ought to have, what we now call, The Inner Mission impulse.

Not long ago a Lutheran judge, in one of our large southern cities, told what a call there is for men and women of strong Christian character, and with the milk of human kindness, in their hearts, to be big brothers and sisters to some of the fatherless, motherless, or, worse, deserted, boys and girls, who are wards of the state, or the courts. It costs little money. Just a little time and effort; just serving as an older friend and adviser; just to show them that there is some one who cares; above all that Christ cares; just some one to fill the hungry spot in a young human life struggling upward toward the warmth and the light. Just a little service, but one that may make an eternal difference in a human life. Yes, two human lives; yours, or mine, and another.

Beginning at Jerusalem, at home. I suppose we have all done this. You parents, I trust, have all taught your children to say their prayers; you have tried to get them to love the Lord Jesus, and to walk in His ways. This is in fulfillment of this command. That is missionary work. But honestly now, how many of us, outside our own families, have ever patiently, earnestly, perseveringly tried to bring some one else to know and love the Lord Jesus as friend and Savior? It can be done. The other evening at the garden party, where all was fun and laughter, I made arrangements to call on a man and his wife for the purpose of discussing the Christian life, and Church-membership. There are people almost everywhere who are waiting for some one to speak the word. Let us speak it, and leave the result with God.

There is a hymn which speaks of bringing in the sheaves. The sheaves are human souls, human lives. Have you ever harvested one? Can you at least say: I have tried? patiently and faithfully tried?

The time is coming when it will be seen that the only thing worth anything is human life. It is true now, only it is not so apparent. As God's workman, using His means by His grace, have I a saved human life to my credit? Let us begin our mission work at home. Remember, we are not responsible for results. We are responsible only for doing our God-given duty.

The Second Step In Christ's Missionary Program

In the very nature of the case, with a message such as the disciples had, with such a Lord as they had, knowing Him as they did, the work of winning souls could not long be confined to Jerusalem. The new made Christians in Jerusalem would locate elsewhere, and they took their religion with them. Many today leave their religion at home when they go away. The truth is, when they do this, they have little religion to leave, at home, or elsewhere. In pursuit of trade and pleasure, the Christians of Jerusalem would visit other places; and they were not reluctant, neither afraid, nor ashamed, to speak of their new found Savior. Soon in many places throughout Judea little groups of Christians were formed. And these began the process of building up their own home base. Then they would begin to reach out. Samaria, before the time of Christ, had been to the Jews essentially a foreign land, despite the fact that it was the geographic center of the Holy Land. And the Samaritans to the Jews were beyond the pale. Now all is changed. Philip goes boldly into Samaria for the purpose of preaching Christ. And multitudes of the Samaritans gave heed, with one accord, to Philip's message about Christ.

A new day had dawned in this ancient land of promise. There were still Jews of the old stripe, quarreling about robes and sacrifices and man-made laws. But a new Jewry had arisen which was not overly concerned about mint, anise and cumin. These were the men who were gathered about Jesus, who had caught His vision and His Spirit. Their line of vision did not stop with the borders of little Palestine. With clarified vision they were beginning to see the logical, inevitable consequences of the person,

teaching, and mission of Jesus, — that it was to be universal, — for the world. But their own land was their home base. Jesus was in a special sense their heritage. His Gospel was in a special sense theirs to give to the world. And so, as the word says, they filled Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and every available place, with the message about Jesus.

This, in the language of today, we call Home Mission work; work outside of our own congregation, but in our own land, and, more or less, among our own people. This work proceeds today much as Jesus originally commanded, and has done so in all the history of our land. From the older centers of population adventurous spirits go forth to newer centers as opportunity calls. If these people are loyal to Jesus Christ, loyal to their own soul's best interests, they soon begin to look around for brethren in the faith with whom they may cooperate in securing the preaching, of the Word, and the administration of the Sacraments. And a call is sent for help. If, as often happens, these people, in pursuit of temporal wellbeing, for the time being, forget the needs of their souls, the Church from which they came, unsolicited, sends the Gospel herald to remind them of their danger and their duty.

In this way thousands of congregations have been formed; the mother congregations helping the scattered people to build their churches; and helping them, for a time, to support their pastors. Some of our largest, and most liberal, congregations were started in this way.

We also have our Samaria here in the United States, in the colored people; often neglected, and often despised; but not responsible for being here, and not alone responsible for their condition. We are trying to discharge a fraction of our duty toward these people; for a time in a rather half-hearted fashion; but now with more earnestness. White pastors have accepted the responsibility of preaching Christ to the colored people; there are a number of pastors of color, and teachers also, working among them. We are also doing a little work among the Mexicans where a great work ought to be done.

All this is in line with Christ's explicit command. We have been reaching out in the country and people I about us. We have been building up the home base. We have shown that, to some extent, at least, we recognize the responsibility of being our brother's keeper. Some of us, no doubt, are ready

to say, when the statistics are mentioned: That sounds fine, we have been doing something worthwhile: We are not given to discouragement, or to discouraging others; but conscience compels me to raise a question. I will not ask: Did we do all that should have been done? All that awaits to be done? Of course not. There is much, very much, that still waits to be done. I will narrow down the question: Did we, as a congregation, as individuals, do all we should have done? During the past year did we really try to do our duty in helping to bring some one to Christ? Considering our comforts, pleasures, luxuries did we give proportionately to save men's souls? Do we think Jesus said to us: "Well done, good and faithful servant?" I am not answering this question for you. I would not attempt it. I have to answer it for myself before God. And so will you.

However we may answer this question, the sad fact remains that, at times, those in charge of this branch of the work have had to make a reduction in the appropriations for this work. It may be that we overreached ourselves in other directions, though I question it. It may be we all did all we could, though that is questionable. However it may be, it is a sad state of affairs when Jesus says: Go, and His children say: No, we cannot. It is a sad state of affairs when whole communities give out the Macedonian cry: Come over and help us, just help us to get a start; and those to whom the call comes throw up their hands, and say: We cannot help you. If church members had given, say, just twenty-five cents additional, not a Sunday, not a month, but for the year, less than one-half cent a Sunday, this backward step could have been avoided.

Some of our people give liberally. Some few, like the poor widow of the Gospel, give sacrificially. The trouble is so many of our people give nothing, or next to nothing, for missions. They have no consciousness of responsibility to Christ, or the souls He died to save. In reality, they are squarely defying Christ's last, great direct command. Theirs is the responsibility, if we tell them and they still refuse.

Please remember that more than half our people here in the United States are outside the Church, most of them, very likely, living apart from Christ, who dares to affirm: "No man cometh to the Father, but by Me."

There is another fact staring us in the face. This fact is that the Church has a task to perform such as, we believe, it has never before faced in our

land. There have always been, people outside the Church; but usually they were simply indifferent, or silently scornful. Many are still so; but many others are possessed of a spirit of rabid radicalism; they are bitter enemies of the Church, some even denying its right to exist. With this wave of antagonism, very naturally and inevitably so, lawlessness and crime have grown apace. If the Church of the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ does not bestir herself, we may, one of these days, come to the place where neither life nor property is safe in our land; like France during the Revolution, and Russia at the present time.. The Church's first mission is to save men's souls; her next mission is, through saved men and women, to save society and the state.

The Final Step In Christ's Missionary Program

Peter, James, John, Paul, and the others, were not to be impractical dreamers, so many of whom never do anything at hand, however much there may be to do; because just around the corner, and over the hill, there is so much more to be done, and it is so much more promising. These men were to go to work right where they were. Their home-land was a hotbed of envy, jealousy, and the attempt to destroy the newborn faith. But the enemies overreached themselves. The success of their Satanically inspired plan to put Jesus to death was their undoing. Jesus was to win a notable victory right among these people, and these men were to be His workers. Only when this work was done were they, or those whom they raised up, to move on to new labors, and new conquests. And they did. They followed Jesus' program: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria.

Soon unexpected doors were opened to the Apostles, and others. Where doors were opened they entered. Unexpected recruits enlisted in the ranks of the militant workers for the cause of the Savior crucified. The Spirit of God, and the voice of the uplifted Christ, broke down the bitter antagonism, and won the soul of the once persecuting Saul. The indomitable zeal that once threw its full weight against the new faith, the heart of which was Jesus Christ, was now, with a new fervor, and a quickened zeal, enlisted in its favor. And the final step in Christ's missionary program was on, that of carrying the Gospel, of witnessing of Jesus, to the ends of the earth.

What a magnificent, awe-inspiring spectacle this early Christian missionary program presents. All around the little land where Christianity had its birth were the mighty empires, or the remnants of the mighty empires, that had ruthlessly ruled the known world. There was scarcely a province anywhere which had not, at some time, trembled under the tread of their mighty armies. Some of them had possessed, some of them now possessed, fabulous wealth. In some of these lands art, and literature, and philosophy had reached a point of excellence in development that has seldom, if ever, been surpassed.

Rome was now in the saddle. Her legions ruled from the British Isles to Persia, from Egypt to the distant north. Now from little Palestine, desert-skirted, and sea-bound, with no army, no navy; from this little land, which had had no native ruler for some hundred, or more, years, enthusiasts were going forth, singly, or in little groups; and their avowed purpose was to bring all these lands to faith in a new doctrine, into allegiance to a new King. Yes, a King who was of the despised blood of Israel; a King who had been crucified as an upstart claimant to royalty. Surely either these men were mad, or they were specially sent of God. The sun never before and never since has looked down on such another undertaking.

These men were not of noble lineage; they were not literary men, or rulers. Nearly all of them were just common folk: fishermen, tradesmen, artisans, a physician. They carried no arms. They carried no royal proclamations. Their purses, most of the time, were empty. Most of them could not meet on common ground, the philosopher in the academy, or the rhetorician in the forum. These men, and women, were unusual in only one or two things. They knew Jesus Christ. The Spirit of the living God had touched their hearts, their minds, their lips. They were afire with a passion that could not be quenched. Their mission, the one thing for which they lived was to tell the world about Jesus Christ, and of the salvation that was to be found in Him, and Him alone.

Soon in all these lands increasing numbers of people were becoming increasingly interested. In spite of mockery, in spite of persecution and death ever increasing numbers came to accept the new faith, and bow the knee to Jesus Christ. The theological mind of the Semite, the mystic mind of the Indian seer, the philosophic mind of the Greek intellectual, the legal mind of the Roman, some of all of these, and still others, accepted Jesus

Christ, Israel's crucified Messiah. Why? Because all of them were hungry for salvation, and He meets men's heart wants as no one else can. If there was nothing else in all the world but the history of missions, the history of the Christian Church, I would believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

For about seven hundred years the missionary passion of those first years kept burning with more or less brightness. The Roman empire sat at the feet of Jesus. Jesus was worshipped from Africa to Russia, and westward to Scandinavia, and the British Isles. Then in the Church there came a time of growing indifference. And Mohammedanism overwhelmed the Christian faith in many lands; largely by force of arms, in part because it had a passion which Christianity at the time lacked. By the time of the Reformation the Church had ceased to think of heathendom save as a strange hinterland of mystery, magic, wealth, and horrors. And the energy which should have been spent in evangelization was spent in internecine religious wars. But the eighteenth century saw a new awakening of the missionary spirit. Increasing numbers of Christian men and women began to hear, and recognize the mandatory character of Jesus' command: Go into all the world, preach the Gospel, baptize. The past century has come to be known as the age of missions.

However, brethren, the task is not yet completed. With all that has been done, there is still much more to be done. It is estimated that there are still one billion people in the world who know not Christ. In China there are three hundred and fifty million people, only two hundred thousand know anything about Jesus Christ. There are a hundred and sixty million demon worshippers in Africa, only one million have learned to know anything about Jesus Christ. There are about three hundred million inhabitants in India. Only one in three hundred knows anything about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There are about thirteen thousand missions scattered throughout the non-Christian world. If each one of these mission stations was given a parish of twenty-five thousand souls, there would still be nearly seven hundred million without any Christian teaching, or Christian contacts. Does this mean anything to us? Does it ever give us a regret? Has it ever led us to offer a petition to the throne of grace, in accord with the exhortation of Jesus Himself: "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth laborers into His harvest"?

No one of us can do very much. No congregation, no Synod can make much of an impression on this vast mass of unevangelized humanity. It is a gigantic task for the whole of Christendom. But as individuals, and as a Synod, we are obligated to do what we can. That word "Go" from the lips of Jesus to His Church still stands. He has established the boundary to which we must seek to penetrate, the ends of the earth. Evidently the Church of Jesus Christ through the ages is going to have much for which to answer on this score. With few exceptions, like the Church in the early centuries, like the Moravians of more recent times, and the Adventists of the present, and isolated bodies here and there, the Church has little more than played with its mission task.

The various Churches have their spheres of activity in various parts of the non-Christian world. Our Church is represented almost everywhere. In India we have a well defined field, with a million or more souls. Each of our American missionaries there has the equivalent of a parish of sixty-six thousand souls. Besides, there are a number of native catechists and evangelists, also teachers. A number of new mission stations are to be established in this land. We are really doing something worthwhile in India. And our people seem to be willing to support this work as well, if not better, than the mission work at home. Let us not become weary in well doing. It is little enough at best that we are doing.

I have long entertained an ideal for our congregation with respect to the foreign field, that is that we assume the responsibility for the entire support of one of our missionaries in India. Some of our other congregations are doing this. We could do it. And it would have a fine spiritual influence on our own lives. It would give us the satisfaction of knowing that what we are doing for ourselves here at home, we are trying to do for our dark-skinned, underfed brothers and sisters over in India. Let us think it over.

Brethren, in spite of all that has been done by the Church, during the past century in the way of missions, only a beginning has been made. The task before us is staggering in its proportions. And the work is being diabolically opposed at almost every step. But we dare not falter. The Son of God goes forth to war, a kingly crown to gain. His conquests are the souls of men, won by love, the Gospel of love. You and I are His armor-bearers, the servants through whom He makes His conquests.

Lord, help us get rid of our spiritual inertia; give us a quickened consciousness of the fundamental unity of the race, and the essential equality of the worth of souls in America and in Africa; give us an increased perception of Thy love for us, and the fact that with the same intensity of love Thou lovest the man in Borneo; impress on us anew the livingness, and present imperativeness of the command: Go, go to the ends of the earth, go till the last soul is won. Thus shall we walk in the blessedness of Thy felt approval. Amen.

Stewardship Sunday. Christian Stewardship.

Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own;

For ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20.

And he sat down over against the treasury, and beheld how the multitude cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

And there came a poor widow, and she cast in two mites, which make a farthing.

And he called unto him his disciples, and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, This poor widow cast in more than all they that are casting into the treasury:

For they all did cast in of their superfluity; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

ST. MARK 12:41-44.

It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

1 CORINTHIANS 4:2.

IN RECENT YEARS we have heard much about stewardship. It is a word that has come into more or less popular use. Especially in the Church the words steward, and stewardship, come into increasing use. The Church has stewardship secretaries of various departments of Church-work. One of the chief duties of these officials is to give emphasis to this idea of general Christian stewardship; to bring home to men and women everywhere, old and young, that we are all stewards, and stewards in all things; that we all have divinely imposed duties to perform, and that we are all going to be held accountable for the proper discharge of these duties.

The idea of stewardship is not a new invention, or discovery, in the Church. It is as old as the Church itself. It is as old as man. Man is a creature under authority. He has duties to perform, for his own best interests, for the best interests of those about him. For the proper performance of these duties he is held accountable. This is stewardship.

It is a difficult proposition for the average mortal to keep things in proper balance. Most of us can entertain but one major thought at a time. Because of this we take up some subject with more or less enthusiasm, and forget, and neglect, others of, probably, equal importance. When we get tired of this subject, we ride another hobby. It has been this way with the subject of Christian stewardship. Now and then, here and there, it has been given some emphasis. Much of the time, and by most people, it has received very inadequate attention. Now it is beginning to receive somewhat the attention its importance deserves.

As a subject fundamental to our own individual Christian life, and equally fundamental to the proper performance of our Christian duties, let us consider this question of Christian Stewardship.

I.

In the first place, let us briefly consider the subject of stewardship itself.

It does not seem to be difficult to get people to understand the idea of ordinary stewardship. The normal child, of ten or twelve, in the Sunday-school, can be made to understand, reasonably well, that a steward is one to whose care has been committed the property of another. A steward is a manager, a supervisor, an overseer for some one else. The Gospel parable of

the talents is a story of stewardship. The Master deals out a number of talents to different men. These men are responsible, not only for the safe return of the original amount entrusted to them, but for a proper increase.

No, the trouble is not that we do not understand the general principle of stewardship. We know that all right. When one man appoints another to oversee his farm, to manage his store, or superintend his plant, the relationship, and the responsibility, is plain. We understand the idea of stewardship all right, but we rebel at the idea of being stewards. This is the real trouble. It is not of the mind. It is of the spirit.

Among men we have come to associate with stewardship the idea of inferiority and subjection. It ought not to be so, but it is so. And this false conception has its influence on us, even in things religious. A false pride, a false spirit of liberty has gotten hold of us. There is something in us that wants to say: I will do as I please; and I will do as I please with what is mine.

Christian stewardship does not deal, first of all, with human relationships. We are stewards, primarily, because of our relationship to God. God is the author and owner of all things. He is the supreme master of all things. He is the One who distributes the talents. Our responsibility is to Him. Our big debt is owned to Him. That means that we are His stewards. But it is the same old feeling that prompts so many people to rebel against the idea of stewardship even here. Man wants to assert his independence. He wants to say, and many do say, even to God: I do as I please. I own no authority but myself. I pay no tribute to any one.

Poor deluded mortals! They do not see that this is striking the hand that feeds them, that it is rebellion against the very power by which they live. They do not discern, till possibly too late, that in this way, instead of finding liberty, and freedom of movement, they are coming into the dominance of a perverted spirit that leads to ever increasing servitude in mind and heart. Only when man moves in the orbit for which he was created, and performs the functions for which he was designed, does he find liberty, and peace, and joy.

II.

The basis of all intelligent stewardship, all stewardship that awakens enthusiasm, and begets joy, is the full and free recognition of the stewardship of life itself.

That I consider my possessions as something held in trust for God and His work means very little till I have come to know that my life is a gift of God, that I am accountable to Him for it; that all my faculties of mind and heart are to be employed with reference to the will of Him who gave them. This is the only view of life which ennobles life, which lifts it up into the realm of the highest things, and makes it a factor in things eternally abiding and worthwhile.

Frances Ridley Havergal wrote a hymn on this subject of our belonging to God, and of surrendering ourselves to Him.

“Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord to Thee;
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 lips, and let them be
Filled with messages for Thee.”

This hymn is not one of mere unreasoning sentiment. It is a statement of what ought to be. And some of us no doubt mean it when we sing it. But none of us ever fully live up to it. There is too much self-will in us. There is too much forgetfulness in us. But this should be our conscious ideal. And the substance of this hymn should be the prayer of our life. And it can be true not only of the preacher, the deaconess, the social worker, it can be true, it ought to be true, of every Christian.

If our Christianity has consisted of isolated actions, of going to church occasionally, of reading the Bible occasionally, of doing a good deed occasionally, of giving a little money to the church occasionally, when we felt like it, it amounts to little. The only religion that really means anything, that really affects one's life, is the religion that claims a man's whole life, to which a man surrenders himself; which furnishes the motive power of one's whole life.

If God is really God, if He has a right to claim anything of me, He has a right to claim everything. If He is God He is the author of my being, the One in whom I live and move, the author of every good and perfect gift. God is not a tyrant Master. He does not rule me just to show His power. He is my father. I am His son. He loves me. He has my interests at heart. He rules the world for my final good. Jesus is my brother. He loves me. He gave His life for my salvation. He has a right to demand all things of me. But He rules in love. He rules to serve my highest good, my happiness; my sphere of usefulness in this world, my eternal destiny, is bound up with God's person, and God's will. Because of this I freely surrender my life to Him, to His will, to the power of His life. This is stewardship, the stewardship of life. And it is the only religion that amounts to very much, or gets you anywhere in this world so far as the religious life is concerned.

In real stewardship, the stewardship of life, the first great question is: What does God want me to do with my life? The greatest question that confronts any person is: What investment am I to make of my life? The great question is not: How much money can I make, how much of a splurge can I make in the world, how much can I squeeze out of the world, how much can I get the world to honor me? The big question is: What kind of thing is this life of mine going to be when I come to lay it down at the feet of my God? When a man has gotten this idea of life, he has gotten an idea of the meaning of the stewardship of life. He knows that he is not his own. That he is not privileged to do as he pleases even with his own life. He belongs unto the Lord. He has been bought with a price.

Along with this idea of life-stewardship comes the idea of finding the thing God wants us to do in life. I believe that in the divine plan there is some one thing God wants each one of us to do. And that in doing that one thing we come into our highest manhood, or womanhood development; find our highest joy in life, and make our highest contribution to human welfare. And, remember, this applies not only to the ministry, or other form of directly religious work. It applies to every honest and legitimate form of work. A man can make shoes for the Lord, he can sell groceries for the Lord, he can build a house for the Lord, he can keep accounts for the Lord, he can sing for the Lord, he can be a banker for the Lord, he can farm for the Lord, he can teach for the Lord.

It is because so many people have never caught this vision of life itself as an investment for the Lord, and of all life and life's work as a service to the Lord, as a working together with the Lord, that life is to them such a poor, meaningless, joyless thing.

Young people, I want especially to ask you a question, or two. How are you training yourselves to look on life? What is life to you? Just an opportunity to grab off a few things as you go along? A kind of machine that you drive along toward some goal that you, perhaps whimsically, have selected? Or is life a gift of God, a mysteriously great gift, the great mission of which is to find its place in God's eternal program? For what are you living? Just to get, and enjoy? Or to make a contribution to the great Father's great plan for you and the universe? What are you doing with your body? Are you making it merely an instrument of what you call pleasure? Are you using it merely as a machine with which to do things? Are you pampering it or abusing it? Or is it to you a gift of God? A temple in which the spirit of God dwells? A temple that is itself to become eternal?

In determining on a calling, a profession, career, what is your controlling motive? The path, the impulse of the moment, the lure of gold, the desire for name and fame? Or are you really desirous of finding out what God's will for you is, the one thing for which you are fitted, the one thing in which you will find happiness, the one thing through which you can make your best contribution to human welfare, and the growing Kingdom of God?

What are you doing with your talents? Are you honestly trying to find out what they are? Are you honestly cultivating them, and listening to the voice of God when He speaks? Are you treasuring the moments as they fly? Are you investing them as one who must give an account for every one of them? Are you really trying to make the most of life? not selfishly, but unselfishly, to the glory of God?

This is a glimpse of the idea of the stewardship of life. It is not something to give one the blues. It is the only life that is ultimately worthwhile, that goes on from victory to victory. It is the only life that finds any deep-seated, lasting pleasure in life. It is the only life that makes any lasting contribution to the world's good. And this is the only Christian life that is fundamentally sound.

III.

When one has come to an appreciative understanding of the principle of the stewardship of life; it is but a step, a natural and inevitable step, to the stewardship of possessions.

It is because we have had such hazy ideas about the stewardship of life that we have had inadequate views concerning our stewardship of material things. But many people who profess to be God's children, and desirous of learning, and doing, His will, are still very slow to yield the right to do as they please with what they call their own. Many a man, and woman, claims to have a surrendered mind, and a surrendered heart, who has not a surrendered treasure.

There is still room for the Church, and its individual members, to learn much about ownership. We are in love with the word mine. We are both proud and jealous of our property rights. We like to point to our titles of ownership, and say: That is mine. And with what an emphasis we can say it. And with what positiveness we can say: I would like to see anyone who can tell me what to do with my own.

The highest authorities in the world, the law of Moses, and the teaching of Jesus, recognize the rightness of individual ownership. If I, by inheritance, by labor and thrift, or by legitimate business, obtain title to a piece of property, it belongs to me, and not to some one else. I have the say as to its use and control, and not some one else. But have we absolute control of it, even so far as our fellowmen are concerned? If you think so, just try it. Just refuse to pay your taxes, and see what happens. Try to use it in clear defiance of the best interest of your neighbors, and await results. Levies are constantly made on our possessions for the common good. Do not these things show that our titles to possessions are not arbitrary, and not entirely absolute; they are conditional. They are based on the constitution of things. Besides, the only title we have to any property is that of a limited lease. We may transfer what we have to others, but we cannot keep it, we cannot take it along with us. If we could, it would not do us any good.

It seems to me that these observations ought to help make it easier for us to understand that over against God there is no such thing as absolute ownership. Whether we accept it or not, such is the case. "The earth is the

Lord's, and the fulness thereof." We have possession, but we are not owners. God is the absolute owner. We are but stewards. Being stewards, we are responsible for our use of all that which He entrusts to our care.

God claims that the cattle on all the hills are His. He claims the first ownership of all the silver and gold, all the precious stones, the coal, the oil, and all else in the bowels of the earth, is in His name. God says He gave us the earth and made it fruitful, He established the seasons, and, therefore, He has something to say as to the profit of all this. God says He has given us all our raw material, and the power of body and mind to use them, that, consequently, He has a right to have a voice in the way we use them.

What, then, in general, is the law of the Christian stewardship of possessions? Just this, that I recognize that my material blessings, whether great or small, have come through divinely devised, and controlled, channels; that they are, indirectly, gifts of our Heavenly Father. That His will, His plans, should be taken into account in our use of all these things; that His honor should be sought in the use of all these things. And stewardship clearly, implies accountability. We must give an account of all departments of our financial affairs to the Lord, as well as to the assessor and tax collector. We may cheat them, but we cannot cheat Him.

A man may be just as arbitrary about these things as he chooses. Instead of honoring God with his substance, as we are told to do, a man may dishonor God in every move he makes. He may make his money dishonestly; he may blaspheme God in the way he uses it; every step he takes may be in defiance of the law of God. And a man like this, for a time, may prosper financially. The Daugherties, and Falls, and Sinclairs seemed to prosper for a time. They may continue to have money. But a man of this stripe is not a steward of God, it matters not how many churches he belongs, or how much money he gives to charitable or religious purposes. No man can bribe God with a gift.

The man who is a steward of God as to his possessions, and if he is not a steward here he is scarcely a steward anywhere else, is one who recognizes that God rules everywhere; that the man who is a Christian on Sunday must be a Christian on Monday, wherever he is, whatever he is doing. The man who is not a Christian when he has money in his hand, is not a Christian when he has a Bible or a prayerbook in his hand.

Money, and the things which are the equivalent of money, furnish the acid test of character. A man has many of the elements of real manhood when you can implicitly trust him when you put money in his hand; when he is honest, and when you can trust his judgment in its use. And both the Word of God, and common experience, prove that he is an exceptional man who keeps his head when wealth comes, especially when it comes suddenly, and abundantly, and, as we say, easily.

A good many people, in times past, as they contemplated the responsibility of stewardship of material things, became affrighted, took vows of poverty, and fled into convents and monasteries. And sometimes the attempt is made, usually by envious people, to put a burden on the conscience of those who have been successful in financial affairs. I do not think this is altogether just. I believe some people have a genius for business, making money, as some other people have a genius for law, or medicine, or literature, or music. A faithful steward is bound to increase his possessions, by so doing he is increasing his lord's estate. I believe that every man who makes money honestly, and uses it wisely, is a benefit to mankind. I admire the man who can say: I have all that I need, I should like to retire; but for the sake of my employees, and for the good of the community in which I live, I will carry on.

I do not envy the man who makes money. I do not underestimate his contribution to the social program. I am not in the money making game. My service to the world runs in another line. My happiness comes from another source. What I, as a steward of moral and spiritual things, am concerned about is that we all remember that we are all but stewards, and do not forget what stewardship means. Stewardship means accountability; whether we deal in cents or dollars, in hundreds, or thousands, or millions of dollars, we have to give an account of how we make our money, and how we spend it. Some day we will have to show our books. Our accounts will be audited. Jesus says: Give an account of thy stewardship. And woe unto those who have built their houses, their business, by fraud. And woe unto those who have withheld from the Lord His share.

One of the terms of stewardship is that a proper return on the investment be made to the owner. We cannot put this payment into the hands of God Himself. But we reinvest it in His work. That is God's way of carrying on His particular work, His church, and its enterprises. He says: You are my

children. I have made you all you are. I have given you all you have. Now here is the work I, your Lord, your Father, want done; and which you will want done in proportion as you love me. Occupy, and carry on, till I return. This is what lifts industry, business, employment, out of the swelter, puts a soul into it, puts the stamp of God on it, and makes it part and parcel of the one great divine program of human progress, and human happiness, that goes on from time into eternity.

Always there have been some people who have caught a vision of the righteousness, the beauty, the blessedness of this divine program. There are an increasing number who are exercised about it today. Some would like to know, more definitely, what the terms of this stewardship are. In the Old Testament times there was little difficulty. The rules governing stewardship of property were specific. The minimum was one-tenth. The New Testament lays down no specific rules as to amount. This is left, very largely, to the dictates of the enlightened conscience and loving heart.

The New Testament, however, does lay down some general rules as to the discharge of our stewardship in material things. We are not told just how much we are to give; but we are told that we should give proportionately, as the Lord has prospered us. This applies not only to the amount of money we make, but to other circumstances and conditions. Two families may make exactly the same amount of money; but one may be blessed with health, the other with costly illness; the one may have costly responsibility thrust upon it from sources other than its own immediate family circle. These things make a difference in the application of that word prosperity. And has always made me loathe to pass judgment on people's liberality.

The New Testament lays down another rule regarding our stewardship obligations. The Apostle tells us we should give systematically. He suggests that on the first day of the week we should lay aside the Lord's part. It is to be not only a part, but a proportionate part, — as the Lord has prospered us. And we are not to wait till every other obligation is met, and give the Lord what is left, if anything.

The Gospel lesson for today, while it says nothing specifically about stewardship, has some splendid thoughts about Christian giving, which is one phase of Christian stewardship. It presents Jesus sitting in the temple, and watching the people give. And He was doing it consciously, with

forethought. Not because He was concerned overly much about the money. But He was concerned, and very much so, about the people who were giving; and in their giving. He saw in their giving an expression of their faith and their love. Lines of sorrow came into the face of Jesus when He saw people casting big sums into the treasury; but even then giving only of their surplus, that for which they had no particular use. Assuredly no proportionate giving, no sacrificial giving. A beam of joy came into the face of Jesus when He saw a woman cast into the treasury the smallest piece of money known to the Jewish people. It was a small gift, but it went far beyond proportionate giving. She gave all she had at the time. The gift was an expression, an utmost expression, of her love for God, and her trust in Him, not only for her soul, or her physical life; but her all.

An increasing number of our people, both clerical and lay, are finding it the easiest way of exercising their stewardship by giving at least one-tenth of their income. It saves them the trouble of sitting down every time and figuring out how much they can give. The one-tenth is set apart, the first thing, for the Lord. Then all the figuring that is necessary is the division of this fund for the various departments of the Lord's work.

The testimony of every one of these is that they have never found so much joy in their Christian giving. And they have found that it pays to be honest with the Lord, that His blessing makes the nine-tenths go farther than ever the ten-tenths did before. I know men who declare that, while they do not give for this purpose, they have found that they never return a dollar to the Lord without getting it back many fold. It does not refer alone to stewardship of money, but it includes it when the Lord says: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom." And above all, it is said: "The liberal soul shall be made fat." Amen.

Reformation. What Is A Lutheran?

Being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you.

1 PETER 3:15.

Dear Friends!

I RECENTLY MADE A TOUR around the Mediterranean with a rather cosmopolitan company. The ship was a French liner, officered and manned by Frenchmen. The passengers, when we left New York, were nearly all American citizens, with a sprinkling, however, of foreign born, but naturalized, citizens, mostly from the Near East. At Naples a company of thirty-five or forty German citizens took passage, bound for the Holy Land.

One evening, as we were sailing the blue waters of the old Mediterranean, there were about seventy-five of us in the lounge; about twenty-five or thirty of the Germans, a small number of French officers, and thirty-five or forty Americans. Some were reading. Some were playing games. Some were talking. Some were writing. Some were sitting apart, dreaming, probably of home and loved ones. At the piano was a young American college woman. Standing around the piano were a half dozen young people who were singing snatches of the songs she was playing. Presently the pianist swung into the Marseillaise. There were not enough Frenchmen present to stage much of a demonstration. But in the light of their eyes, and their bearing, you could see the effect this melody had on them. Then, quite impartially, the pianist played *Die Wacht am Rhein*. The Germans, it had been noted, were rather quiet and reserved. But when they heard the strains of the familiar hymn, played on a French boat, by an American pianist, you should have seen the expression that came to their

faces. And when a goodly number of the Americans joined with them, you should have heard how enthusiastically they sang. Then the pianist played a few chords, and swept into our American national hymn. With the first strains, every American sprang to his feet, and, with a joy close akin to tears, sang that dear old song; never so dear to one as in a foreign land. That was a striking illustration of the grip, and power, of patriotism, of loyalty; the love of the homeland, the ties of kinship.

The thirty-first of October! Reformation day! What train of thought does this announcement bring to our minds? What light does it bring to our eyes? What emotions does it call forth? What heart beat does it accelerate? Of what good resolutions is it the fostering mother? Does it bring forth evidences of spiritual loyalty and enthusiasm?

Wholly apart from its purely religious significance, what event in the past thousand years has meant so much to the world, in so many different ways, as the Protestant Reformation? I wonder whether even we Lutherans appreciate it as it deserves to be appreciated? I wonder whether here, as elsewhere, a certain form of superficial familiarity has not dulled the fine edge of appreciation?

This is Reformation Day. And this is, in the main, a Lutheran gathering. At this time, and with such an audience, there is but one appropriate subject—the Reformation. But how consider it? The usual way is to go back and tell the story, biographically and historically. I am far from being ashamed of Luther, or the part he played in the stirring, heroic days of four hundred years ago. I glory in the events of the Reformation, and in the way the Reformers conducted themselves. But it seems to me that by this time we ought to know this story pretty well. That in which I am most deeply interested is: What lessons are there in the lives, and deeds, and times of those men that are applicable to us in this twentieth century? What great truths, principles, enunciated in that day are applicable in this day? And have we profited by them as we should?

So, instead of giving a formal lesson in *medieval* history, we are going to think, largely, in terms of *current* history, and discuss this question: *What is a Lutheran?*

What is a Lutheran? This is a legitimate question. We should frequently ask this question of ourselves, and answer it to ourselves. It is a legitimate

question for anyone else to ask us. And we should be able to give them a reasonable answer. Our text says we should always be ready to give every one who asks us a reason for the faith, the hope, that is in us. There is no call to be noisy and officious about proclaiming who and what we are; but, as our text says, we should be able to give a satisfying answer to those who ask us.

To me it would be very interesting if I could get, from a representative body like this, an answer, an extempore answer, to questions like this: Why am I a Lutheran? What makes me a Lutheran? What obligations does Lutheranism put upon me as a man, as a Christian, as a citizen? This, of course, is impracticable. In lieu of this, I ask you to keep check of me as I proceed to answer some of these questions, and see whether they are in line with what yours would be, if you expressed them.

I wonder whether a good many of us, when questions like these come up in a mixed company, are not rather apologetic in our attitude, and our answers? Are you men and women, who come in contact with men and women of the world, and of other churches, ashamed, or afraid, to come out boldly with an answer to the questions we have been discussing; then I am sure you do not know your Church, its history, its doctrines, or its fundamental practices.

A Real Christian

What, then, is a Lutheran? My first answer is that a *real* Lutheran is first of all a *real* Christian. This is his *first* concern. This is his *greatest* glory. There is *nothing higher*, there is *nothing better*, there is *nothing more glorious*, than just being a childlike, but intelligent, believer in Jesus Christ; and living in personal fellowship with Him, and being a coworker with Him. My greatest glory is *not* the things which *distinguish* me from God's other real children. My greatest glory is in the great fundamental things of faith and life which are the *common* possession of *all* God's real children.

Let us not forget that Lutheranism, or rather, I should say, Protestantism, did not have its real birth with the nailing up of the ninety-five theses, nor yet at Worms, or Augsburg. It goes farther back than any of these. Lutheranism, as it came to be known, had its birth in the battle Luther was fighting out, for months and years, in the *depths of his own vigorous soul*. It

came out of his struggle with sin, it came out of his struggle for righteousness, it came out of the fact of what he found in Jesus Christ, — a real personal friend and Savior, whose life became his life, whose death took away his sins, whose righteousness became his righteousness. Christianity, with Luther, was not a matter of statistics, or printed formulas, or the mere acceptance of a set of objective principles. Christianity with Luther was an experience in his own life; an experience which involved, very definitely, certain great truths about God and man, God's attitude toward man, and God's work for man, and man's relationship toward God. And this experience in the soul of Luther is of the soul of Lutheranism. And, my brethren, unless we are vitally interested in these the biggest of all problems; unless we have had something of Luther's experience; unless we have been terrified by sin; unless we have found something of what Luther found in Christ, and rejoice in forgiveness and God's favor we are not real Lutherans, however much we may call ourselves by that name.

It will not be without profit that we keep ourselves reminded of the fact that first of all a Lutheran is a Christian; a converted person, a forgiven person, a justified person, a person who is walking the way of progressive holiness of life; because there are a good many Christian people of other names who question whether we Lutherans are Christians. They say we have never been converted. And they sometimes have the boldness to try and convince us that we are not Christians. And I have known of instances where they have succeeded in unsettling people's faith in their relationship to God.

The average man of the world, who has only a smattering of history; and the average man in many a church, seems to know very little about Luther save that he is reported to have said:

“Wer liebt nicht Wein, Weib und Gesang,
Der bleibt ein Narr sein Leben lang.”

It cannot be proved that Luther ever said this. But the impression seems to prevail, among a good many people, that this is a pretty fair characterization of Luther, and the Christians called Lutherans. Of course there are nominal Lutheran Christians, as there are nominal Christians of other names; but, let us ask, with becoming humility, will not the average Lutheran Christian, in

integrity, in trustworthiness, in knowledge of divine truth, in faith in God, in the spirit of devotion, in the service of God and his fellowman, compare favorably with the average Christian of other names?

The Lutheran Christian, as a rule, is, constitutionally, and by training, rather quiet and undemonstrative. And this is often misunderstood to his disadvantage. But this does not preclude the fact that his convictions are firm, and that his feelings run deep and strong, and that the fire of devotion burns in his breast. But, while there is such a thing as an undue assertiveness, and a superficial demonstrativeness, let us not forget that our great Master tells us not to hide our light under a bushel. And this, I am afraid, many of our Lutheran people, at times, have been guilty of doing. We Lutherans owe it to the world, we owe it to other Christians, we owe it to ourselves, we owe it to our Christ, to be thoroughbred Christians; outspoken, clear speaking, unashamed, and unafraid; and then so to live that others may see our good works, and glorify, not us, but our God.

A Protestant Christian

What is a Lutheran? A real Lutheran is a real Christian, but he is also a real Protestant Christian. The word Protestant is much in evidence in these days. Practically all Christians of the western world, not of the Greek or Roman Catholic Communion, claim, with more or less insistence, the name Protestant. But let us bear in mind that the Lutheran was the first, the original, Protestant Church. And she won the name by fighting for it.

In 1529, twelve years after Luther posted his ninety-five theses, at the Diet of Spire, the Reformers presented their protest against the old church party, which demanded of them certain things which were contrary to their faith, their well established convictions, the plain teachings of God's Word. This Word, and their faith in this Word, they would not give up. And they protested against being asked to give them up. This stand gave them the name Protestant.

In certain quarters the name Protestant was the official title of the Church of the Reformation for more than a hundred years, from the Diet of Spire, in 1529, until the peace of Westphalia, in 1648. And the highest of church authorities have declared that, historically considered, the only church that has a right to be called Protestant is the Lutheran Church.

However, we are not disposed to quibble about these things. The only thing about which we are concerned is that those who want the name Protestant should be what the name proclaims. To be a Protestant Christian means something very definite. It means to have convictions which are the guiding principle of life, convictions based on God's Word, convictions dearer to them than life. To be a Protestant means that one believes, and insists on, liberty of conscience. It was those first protesting men who gave the death-blow to tyranny in church and state in the modern world. They are the ones who struck the decisive blow at priestcraft. They are the ones who gave birth to the modern spirit of liberty, of democracy; of government of the people, by the people, for the people, in church and state.

Are we real Protestants? in church and state? Are we Protestants merely by chance, or by conviction? Do our convictions really mean anything to us? Do we live by them? Do we live for them? Would we rather die for them than live without them? Do we want the other man, the man who differs from us, to have the same right to his convictions that we have, so long as he does not infringe on the common good?

An Evangelical Christian

What is a Lutheran? A real Lutheran is a real Christian, he is a Protestant Christian, he is an *Evangelical* Christian.

Evangelical! That means of the Gospel, in accordance with the Gospel. And the Gospel is the glad story of Jesus Christ, and the salvation that is in Him, and in Him alone. There are a good many things being questioned these days; but the fact of Jesus Christ, and His appeal to the hearts of men, is one of the things concerning which there is the least question. And concerning those who know Him, and all may know Him, there is no question at all. A Lutheran is one who builds his all on Jesus Christ.

The Lutheran is an Evangelical, a Gospel, Christian in distinction to those who think of salvation in terms of the Law. The Lutheran is not one who looks upon God as a taskmaster, and salvation as a laborious process to be worked out by man. This is what the Gospel says about it: "God so loved the world." Yes, the Lutheran Christian is one who has learned to know God as a loving Father, whose heart ever yearns for His children; and Jesus as a loving elder brother, who has borne our burdens, who gives to us His

strength, who links His arm in ours, or puts it around us, and helps us over the rough places, and up the steeps, of life. Yes, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” The Lutheran Christian believes that you do not have to plead, or coax, or fight to get God to save you; but that you actually have to fight against God to keep Him from saving you. And that this is true of all men.

This great truth, as stated by St. Paul, declares: “By grace are ye saved,” by the compassionate lovingkindness of God, “through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast.” To God alone belongs the glory for our salvation. And he who claims to be in doubt about his salvation, or he who claims to contribute anything toward his own salvation, *detracts* from the generous character of the great Father, and discredits the saving work of Christ.

This is the evangelical, and the only Biblical way, of salvation. And it is the only way that puts a solid foundation under a man’s feet. This is the only way in which a man can know whether he is saved or not. And we ought to know it. And we can know it if we will let God have His way, and take Him at His Word. We usually speak of this truth as the doctrine of justification by faith.

A Bible Christian

What is a Lutheran? A Lutheran is a Christian, he is a Protestant Christian, he is a Protestant Evangelical Christian, and he is a Biblical Christian.

The Bible has passed through more vicissitudes than any other book in the world. It has been copied by hand, and translated, and printed, and distributed, more than any other book in the world. It has had more enemies than any other book in the world. It has been banned and burned, at times, in all parts of the world. And some of its worst enemies have been some of its professed friends. In spite of all the vicissitudes through which the Bible has passed, not one real truth of it has been disproved, or weakened. In fact, all the mooted points, that mean anything, have been strengthened, if not finally established, by the archaeological, and other, finds of recent years. Some of men’s views on some minor points have had to be modified in the light of new evidence. And some views on minor things may yet have to be

modified; but not one fundamental truth of 'God's Word has ever been successfully controverted. Neither philosophy, nor science, nor archaeology, nor yet the experiences of men, have overthrown one thing that belongs to the plan of salvation. God our Father, in all the plenitude of His loving-kindness, still sits enthroned the ultimate reality of all realities. Jesus Christ, the God-man, the world's greatest example, in life, as well as in sacrificial service, is without a successful rival, in all the world, for the sovereignty of men's hearts. Nowhere else do men find that quickening, awakening, invigorating, transforming Spirit which breathes through the words of this Book.' Because of this, we are not ashamed, or afraid, to affirm, in the face of this twentieth century spirit of iconoclasm, that we are Biblical Christians; that we are doctrinal Christians; that we are members of a teaching, confessing church. We generally speak of this subject by saying that the Lutheran is the Church of the pure Word and the Sacraments.

A Liberal Christian

What is a Lutheran? A real Lutheran is a real Christian, he is a Protestant Christian, he is an Evangelical Christian, he is a Biblical Christian; and, if he is a well-read, intelligent Lutheran, he is, in the true sense of the word, one of the broadest minded, and most liberal churchmen in existence. This is saying a great deal, but I think it is capable of proof.

I know there are narrow minded, illiberal people everywhere. You find them in politics. You find them In business. You find them in all the professions. There are people so narrow minded that they can look through a keyhole with both eyes at the same time. Of course, the Lutheran Church, large as it is, has some of these folk. It would be passing strange if we did not. In spite of this, I reaffirm that the intelligent Lutheran Christian, by virtue of his principles, by virtue of the Confessions of his Church, by virtue of his personal attitude, is one of the most liberal churchmen in the world. For instance, the intelligent Lutheran, while loving his own Church, and loyal to it, does not claim that his is the only saving Church. Some, no doubt, leave this impression; but they are not representative Lutherans. Our confessional position is that there is but one Christian Church on earth, and that it is made up of all those, of every name, in every land, who truly believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and love Him, and serve Him. And so sincere is the Lutheran Church in this that she does not

proselyte, or seek to draw away to herself the members of other churches; she welcomes them, but never makes a business of trying to coax them away.

The Church of Christ is divided by many things. Some insist on a certain form of church government. Some are low church, and some high church. Some want vestments and liturgical forms, some object to them. Some insist on a certain mode of Baptism. Some on certain qualifications of the ministry, such as Apostolic succession, and Episcopal ordination. Now the Lutheran Confessions say that none of these things, and nothing like them, is of sufficient importance to divide the church, which is the body of Christ. So far as any of these things are concerned, the Lutheran Christian says to the Christians of all other names, if you accept the simple statements of God's Word, the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ, and His ordained Sacraments, we will surrender all else for the sake of unity and uniformity. The reason we will not give up these things is that they are not ours to give up. They belong to the Lord Jesus; He has only given them to us in trust. Is this not generous enough? Liberal enough? Could we do more and be conscientious? True to Christ?

We Lutherans have forms of service, church usages, most of them are ancient, and well established, and most of our people love them; but if, by giving up these things, or greatly modifying them, we could really get all Christendom to meet on the common platform of the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ, and His ordained sacraments, we would gladly do it. We will meet anybody, we will meet everybody, on these terms. Could any one, reasonably, ask more? Can anyone be more truly liberal and yet be true to the faith?

Why A Lutheran?

Why a Lutheran? This time we vary our question. Instead of — What is a Lutheran? we ask — Why a Lutheran? If the Lutheran puts the primary emphasis on the fact that he is a Christian, a Protestant, Evangelical, Biblical Christian; if we are ready to go so far, as far as one may without surrendering positive truth, for the sake of unity and harmony; then why carry around a ' man-made name indicative of division?

The sufficient answer is that this name was not of our choosing. Luther did not want those who stood with him, and believed as he did, to be called by his name. Luther's immediate coworkers did not want to be called by his name. Luther's first preference was that he, and those who believed as he did, should just be called Christians. Another name which they regarded with favor was the simple word — Evangelical. In some places, even to this day, those who embraced the Reformation are known as the Church of the Augsburg Confession.

Our name, Lutheran, was given us by our opponents. First of all by Dr. John Eck, soon afterwards by Pope Hadrian VII. The name was at first applied to all Protestants, including Zwingli and his followers. And it was used as a term of derision. In this we are like a great many others of the Christian family. The name Christian itself was first used as a term of ridicule. In the early centuries there was a great controversy about the divinity of Christ. The orthodox leader in the discussion was Athanasius. And all those who stood with him were called Athanasians. At a later date, our Methodist brethren got their name in the same way, it was a term of reproach; but in this instance it was given rather on practical than theological grounds. Having received our name in a way that was meant to be a stigma to us, history has fastened it upon us. And we do not want to be rid of it. We are not ashamed of it. Luther is not our God. He is not our patron saint. We do not pray to him, as we do not pray to any human being. Luther does not save us. But Luther was a brave, true, good man. He was a man of great faith. He had convictions. He had the courage of his convictions. He stood immovably for the truth of God as he saw it. And we could not now discard his name without grave suspicion of wanting to give up the precious truths for which he stood.

Am I A Lutheran?

Am I a Lutheran? Once more I change the form of my question. I have been asking: What is a Lutheran? And I have asked: Why a Lutheran? Now I have another question. And I am not going directly to answer it. I want it to stand as a challenging, thought provoking, heart searching question before each one of us as we go home. This question is: Am I a Lutheran? A real Lutheran? One who deserves the name?

Not only in the church, but everywhere, and at all times, is God to me the great, the ultimate, a personal reality; without whom my soul can never be truly at rest? Is Jesus Christ to me God's latest, and fullest, revelation of Himself? Is He God come down to earth, to be man, that in and through Himself He might lift me, a man, up to God? As I stand in the presence of Jesus the Christ, my God, and my brother, do I see the great, the awful, difference between my life, and His life? Do I begin to see, and to hate, sin? Not sins, merely, but sin, that corroding something that is eating at the heart of my life; that has created an obscuring, isolating, film between me and the divine life? Have my eyes been Spirit-anointed? Have I learned to see that infinite compassion in the eyes of Jesus? Have I learned to know the preciousness of the words: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest?" Have I heard the words, have I taken them to my bosom: Son, daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee? Do I see, and am I in possession of, the liberty, and the joy of the liberty, of the sons, and daughters, of God? Yes, am I, do I verily know myself to be, a son, a daughter, of God; a brother, a sister, of the Christ; not merely by adoption; but by new birth, and by the heart throbs of my life?

Do I recognize that God Almighty, and His firstborn Son, have taken me up into partnership with themselves? Into world partnership with themselves? That He has given to me a place, and a part, in His great scheme of things; the end of which scheme is to be the restoration of all things to the beauty, and the glory of the goodness, of His original creation? Do I realize, not only for an hour on Sunday, but every hour of every day, that my Father's smile is upon me, and my older brother's arm around me, and that they are just as much pleased with me when I do my humble daily task well, whatever it be, as when I preach a sermon, or sing a hymn? because everything is a part of life stewardship?

Like the Christ, do I have a heart for all mankind because God gave to humanity His image, and because that image, now sadly marred, is possible of perfect restoration? Do I love all God's newborn children, who love Him, and serve Him, whatever their name, or nation, or color, or condition in life? Do I love God, do I love men, do I love God's church, well enough to live for it, to serve it? to serve it sacrificially? until it hurts, and delight in the hurt? Am I liberal minded? Am I willing to give up anything, however much I love it, which God has not decided, for the sake of unity and peace?

Do I love God, and His truth, so much that I will not surrender the least thing He has decided, because it is not mine to alter, or surrender? In the light of the eternal issues involved, am I giving a reasonable part of my time to learning, that I may live, the will of my God?

In the light of these, and other, similar truths, let each one of us decide, for himself, the question: Am I a Lutheran? and the similar question: How good is my Lutheranism? Am I a worthy son, daughter, of a noble church? Am I a follower, a devoted follower, of the great-hearted, all-conquering, Christ? Brethren, let us think on these things. Amen.

The State

Arbor Day (School Address).

WE ARE OBSERVING Arbor Day. The name is familiar to us through long usage. I wonder whether we are as familiar with all for which Arbor Day stands?

Our national government thinks so much of Arbor Day that for some years the President of our country has been issuing an annual proclamation urging its observance; an observance which, with its kindred subjects, now often continues for a week. As good citizens, then, if for no other reason, we should give this subject due consideration.

These proclamations, while intended for all, are brought especially to the attention of the pupils in our schools. Unfortunately too many of our older people have closed minds on many subjects. They are not willing to entertain new ideas. Our hope in many things lies with the young people, and depends on their education.

First of all let us consider the origin of the day we are observing.

Origin Of Arbor Day

The tree, whether alone, or in groves, has ever been an object of interest to man. There have been sacred trees, and sacred groves, in many lands. There have been historic trees in lands old before America was discovered. Memorial trees were not uncommon in ancient times. The Aztecs of Central America, hundreds of years before the white man ever trod this land, are said to have planted a tree every time a child was born, and to have given to the tree the same name as that given the child. Men in all ages, and of all degrees of culture, have wondered at trees, and admired them. No doubt tree planting is as old as civilization.

Arbor Day, however, as an institution, is purely American. It came out of the West, and grew out of conditions existing there. Portions of this western

area, though supporting a flourishing agriculture, and with a soil and climate adapted to tree growth, were practically treeless. The first settlers here soon found that, despite other advantages, the lack of trees was a serious drawback. Every farm needs wood for many purposes. Every home site needs trees to complete its setting. Every landscape, however diversified, whatever, otherwise, its attractions, soon becomes monotonous, and somewhat oppressive, if devoid of trees. Every region needs forests for the sake of rainfall and climate. Because of these, and other, reasons, tree planting was carried on to some extent, in parts of our country, long before Arbor Day, as such, was known.

Arbor Day, as a recognized and purposeful program, originated in Nebraska. The plan was conceived, and the name, Arbor Day, proposed, by a member of the State Board of Agriculture, J. Sterling Morton by name. The first Arbor Day officially appointed and observed was April 10:1872. Wide publicity was given the plan, and prizes were offered to the individual, and the agricultural society, planting the greatest number of trees. From that day, almost sixty years ago, Nebraska has not only continuously, but enthusiastically, observed Arbor Day. This movement has wrought such a change in the state that, from being a state in which, originally, only about three per cent of the total area was covered with natural forests, now more than three hundred thousand acres are in growing timber. The state is a leader in practical forestry, and, already in 1895, by act of legislature, became popularly known as "The Tree Planters' State."

From Nebraska the observance of Arbor Day spread to other states. Kansas and Tennessee followed in 1875. Minnesota fell in line the next year. In 1882 North Dakota and Ohio followed.

The first Arbor Day celebration in Ohio was of an unusual nature. It was held in Cincinnati during the time of the Convention of the National Forestry Association, April 1882. Unusual interest in this Convention had been aroused by the visit to this country of Baron Von Steuben, superintendent of the Prussian Crown Lands. Naturally interested in forests, he was amazed at the wasteful manner of our lumbering operations, and the neglect he everywhere found with respect to our wooded lands. Under the stimulus of Von Steuben's criticism, and suggestions, and under the active leadership of Warren Higby, Arbor Day in Cincinnati, April 27, 1882, marked a new departure, so far as its observance was concerned. Under the

direction of the Superintendent of Schools, John B. Peasby, the school children of the city were given a prominent part in the celebration. Twenty thousand of them paraded through the streets to Eden Park, where they sang, recited, and took part in the planting of trees. Much of the beauty of Eden Park today, they say, is attributable to this, and subsequent, Arbor Day labors.

It was the American Forestry Congress, in session at St. Paul, Minnesota, 1883, that passed a resolution recommending the observance of Arbor Day in the schools of every state, and a committee was appointed to demonstrate to school authorities the value of such celebrations. B. G. Northrop, of Connecticut, was made chairman of this committee. At the annual meeting of the National Education Association in 1884 he presented the following resolution: "Resolved, that in view of the valuable results of Arbor Day work in the six states where such a day has been observed, alike upon the school and the home, this association recommends the general observance of Arbor Day for schools in all our states." This resolution was adopted the following year.

Today, a little more than forty years later, Arbor Day is observed, pretty generally, by the schools not only throughout the United States; but in Canada, Spain, Great Britain, Australia, the West Indies, South Africa, New Zealand, France, Norway; and, to some extent, in Russia, Japan, and China.

The time of observing Arbor Day varies somewhat, even in the States, as they are affected by climate; the more southerly states celebrating it earlier than in the north. Several states observe the day in the autumn. This, in brief, is the story of how Arbor Day came to be as an established institution, in this country.

The Purpose Of Arbor Day

The purpose of Arbor Day is largely practical; just as the planting of trees in Nebraska in the early days was prompted by practical needs, apart from poetic dreams and aesthetic requirements. So one of the big aims of Arbor Day is to teach our young people, and older ones also, the worth of the tree in the economic life of the nation. Trees have something to do with climatic conditions, with rainfall and water supply, with the preservation and fertility of the soil; apart from the almost incalculable value which our American

forests have been in a direct way to our people. Our people need to know these things. They need to know that the ruthless, and extravagant, destruction of our natural resources, forest or otherwise, cannot go on forever. They need to know what the destruction of our forest areas is inevitably going to mean to the future of our land. In India, China, and other portions of the world, the rainless seasons, sometimes lasting for several years, and producing famine and pestilence, are largely attributed to the fact that, ages ago, these lands were entirely denuded of forests. On the other hand, when rain does come, falling on ground baked by the sun, without tree or bush, and the leafy mold which the forest creates and preserves, which holds the moisture, it rushes down the gullies, carries off all possible top soil, speedily swells the streams to flood stage, and then almost as quickly subsides, and leaves the water courses dry. Man cannot violate the laws of nature and escape the penalty. To learn these fundamental laws, to observe them, to cooperate with them, this is to be a worker together with the Almighty for human welfare. And to encourage these things is the purpose of Arbor Day.

Arbor Day, then, has a very practical side. It inculcates principles and practices which have a monetary value. Two hundred and fifty towns and communities in the United States have established community forests; that is, forests belonging to the town or community. These eventually provide places for outings and recreation, add beauty to the community, which has monetary value; and in the end often prove actually paying investments. New Bedford, Massachusetts, and Keene, New Hampshire, each report an annual income from their municipal forest of fifteen thousand dollars.

In old world countries this project has long been under way. In Baden, for instance, of 1,564 communities 1,530 have their own forest areas, where planting, cutting, and replanting, which always follows cutting, are directed by competent foresters. The average American does not appreciate such operations. But the time is rather rapidly coming when it will be a vital problem. Arbor Day has as its object to help forestall this day.

Reforestation

With Arbor Day, and the planting of individual trees by individuals, and of groves by groups of individuals, there has been associated, for some time,

education on the problem of general reforestation, and the conservation of natural resources generally, such as protecting the sources of water supply, preventing the pollution of streams, and the like. Of more importance than the individual trees of street, or park, are our great forests of pine, fir, and hardwoods that clothe the sides of our mountain areas, and far stretching hills and plains; and which should be a never failing source of wood, water, places of recreation, refuges for game, and other things necessary to life, for all the generations to come.

Any one who has been through the logging camps of the North, far Northwest, and other places, in recent decades, cannot have left them without a heartache, if he has one iota of love for nature, or a single thought for the generations that are to come. The giants of the hills, that have taken centuries to mature, the admiration of every beholder, whose high reaching crown, and broad-spreading branches, stir the mind to reverie, and the heart to reverence, are brought to the ground with reverberations like distant thunder, crushing and bruising the smaller timber. There is left a veritable tangle of immense limbs, and smaller logs, which, in other regions, would itself be worth a fortune. Something of this necessarily must be. All human progress, it seems, must be by the path of sacrifice. Sacrifice usually, however, is associated with the thought of future good. Here, however, all that is left in the wake is destruction, and added fire hazard. Arbor Day aims to spread the doctrine that if these aged and mammoth giants of the centuries must be slaughtered for man's good, that at least they shall be replaced by children of their kind, for the admiration, and use, of those who come after us.

Often land which bears valuable forests is good for little else. To cut down the valuable timber, with no thought of the younger growth, and with no replacement, thus leaving the land not only idle, but in a state in which it rapidly deteriorates is criminal waste. In most European countries this is not allowed. I have been in Swiss forests. These trees can be cut only under the direction of the forester. Every sizeable limb is utilized, all the remainder is cut up and put in the low places to keep the soil from washing away. And if there is no sapling near to take the place of the tree felled, one is planted. Such a recital is calculated to provoke laughter among many of our American people. But those who know recognize that if something is not done in our land to check our extravagance and waste a lumber famine

looms in the not distant future, beside other ills which go with deforestation. Our deforested lands should not be left to be shorn of the soil they have; they should not be left to reforest themselves by the slow and uncertain processes of an unguided and abused nature; but by intelligent reforestation.

Reforestation, wisely initiated, and intelligently pursued, is not an untried venture. Its possibility, and practicability, has been abundantly proven, by experimentation, both in Europe and America. The justice of this thing as regards the future of our country, as well as its economic value, is one of the things Arbor Day is designed to bring home to the consciousness of the people of our day, especially younger America. We of today have no right to rob future generations of their heritage of use or beauty. The aim of Arbor Day is to help make you young people public spirited men and women, who will have an interest in the public good.

Preserving The Out-of-doors

Another thing Arbor Day seeks to accomplish. The past few decades have seen a great change in the habits of our American people. There always have been out-of-doors men and women. But, as never before, they are becoming nature lovers, at least outdoor enthusiasts. This is as it should be. The groves were God's first temples. Fresh air, sunshine, pure water, and an untroubled heart, are the best tonics in the world. Some of our people, however, need to be taught some very important lessons about God's out-of-doors. Instead of worshippers at the shrine of God made beauty, many act, when they get out, like vandals; they desecrate every spot where they linger a few hours; destruction and filth are the marks of their path. They are careless with fires which may do untold damage, especially out in the larger forest areas. These people may be seen coming in from a spring day outing with arms full, and autos full, of flowering branches, and spring flowers. For what purpose? Mostly to gratify a fleeting fancy; to see them wither and die, and in a few days, to be thrown out. So grievous has this destructive habit become that, in some sections, certain species of plant-life are in danger of extinction. Some states penalize this offense with arrest and fine. This should be the practice everywhere. However, it ought not to be necessary. People who go out to country, or forest, enjoy a great privilege. They should enjoy it to the full, and thank God for their privilege; not

become vandals who destroy what is not theirs alone, which they cannot replace, and thus rob those who come after them of their legitimate heritage of enjoyment.

I think it may be safely asserted that it is the growth of the ideas Arbor Day aims to spread, and to the sentiments engendered thereby, that state governments, and the national government, have increasingly interested themselves in setting apart virgin forests, and unspoiled and unusual areas, as parks, nature's beauty spots, to be perpetually preserved as national playgrounds; places where the people may see, and enjoy, God's masterpieces in His out-of-door artistry. The people are to feel that these places are theirs, and to have the assurance that they will be preserved for their children, and children's children.

The Love Of Nature

In the main, we have spoken of the useful, the profitable, side of the purpose of Arbor Day. This is an important point. It should claim the attention of every public spirited citizen. But the problem of values in dollars and cents, and in creature comforts, is not the only one. Man does not live by bread alone. There is in nearly all people an implanted love of the beautiful. And its cultivation, in the right way, leads to a larger, fuller, richer life. Entrancing is the beauty of nature. The poet and the painter deal with nature. They teach us to see the beauty spread all around us. It is no small part of the purpose of Arbor Day to awaken in the minds and hearts of our young people a love for the beauty of nature.

To those in charge of Arbor Day celebrations in the schools, I would say that it seems to me we might begin to instill this love of simple beauty right at home. In many places, especially in less favored sections, the school surroundings are anything but inviting. The grounds are overgrown with weeds, they are without trees, or, having them, they are often uncared for. It would be a distinct service to the future citizens of the community if the teachers would give the young folks some needed lessons on the worth of a desire for becoming surroundings, and of a legitimate pride in the possession of them. And then lead them in such efforts as are possible in securing these things for the school, and its environment. In a comparatively few years a great change could be wrought in many a school,

and its campus. And the spirit thus awakened, fostered, and directed would carry over into other spheres of life. It would lead, if not at once, to more homes, and home grounds, that are more beautiful in their simplicity; and to a civic pride which will make a decided contribution to the city beautiful, which comes, in the main, not by the bold, costly strides of the few, but more by the intelligent cooperation of the many who have an eye, and a heart, for the beauty of things.

Then there is the beauty of the great out-of-doors, the great open spaces; the snow-crowned heights, secluded and mysterious; the yawning chasms, through which roll the whirling streams with sound as of distant, muffled thunder; the widespread, quiet lakes, with their mirrored hills; the waterfall, fern-bordered, lacedraped and musical; the flower-strewn valleys of emerald green; and still, in places, the forest primeval, the murmuring pines and the hemlocks, bearded with moss; and over all, the azure-tinted sky, with its sheen of gold, traced here and there with cirrus clouds, looking, as Blake said, "as if the angels had gone to worship, and left their plumage lying there."

Yes, the universe is a temple of beauty, a beauty so precious, with potentialities of enjoyment so refined and elevating, that it is distressing to think of the multitudes who live in the midst of it, or at least accessible to it, but are almost as untouched by its influence as if it did not exist. Many of these are just unfortunate, having eyes that have never been taught to see. It is no small part of the purpose of Arbor Day to help give, to the young folks at least, the seeing eye, and the understanding heart.

This is a simple Arbor Day address. I am speaking as a layman, and not a preacher; to pupils in the school, and not to a congregation; but may I not be permitted to say, even here and now, that many of the best minds in the world are convinced that the wonders and beauties of nature, the creature, is but a revelation of the wonder and beauty of the Creator who fashioned them. Should not our love for the beauties we see lead to a love for Him whom, with our natural eyes, we do not see? Should not our communion with nature, in its thousand beauteous forms, lead to communion with Him, the shadow of whose beauty is here revealed? And should not this beautiful world the great architect built as a home for us inspire us to build for Him, in body and life, a temple fit for His indwelling?

Memorial Day.

Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thine elders, and they will tell thee.

DEUTERONOMY 32:7.

THIS IS MEMORIAL DAY, a day of lingering memories; and it is Sunday. Today many of our people, and others, will visit the silent cities of the dead, pause reverently, and place flowers on the windowless houses wherein repose the ashes of their beloved dead. This will be in token that memory still lives. Then they will look up into the bright, smiling blue heaven with the Christian's assured hope of happy, and perpetual, reunion in the land where sorrows and partings never come.

Civic, semi-civic, and especially military organizations, will officially observe Memorial Day. There will be parades, orations, firing of salutes, and the decorating of the graves of soldiers. Originally this day was set apart for the soldiers of the Civil War. Now, by common consent, it includes the soldiers of all our wars. Officially Memorial Day is a soldiers' day. But in most places, on the part of the people in general, and by a natural process of the association of ideas, Memorial Day has come to be observed as a day of special remembrance for all our loved and worthy dead.

Somewhat in the latter sense, let us consider: The Call of Memorial Day.

I.

It will not be amiss to briefly recall the history of the day we celebrate. There is a tradition that Memorial Day owes its origin, with us, to the chance remark of a Union soldier, of foreign birth, who, at the close of the war between the states, told how, in the land from which he came, it was the

custom, once a year, to strew the graves of the country's soldier dead with flowers.

There is another account of the origin of Memorial Day that seems more reasonable, and better authenticated. In the early days, when the wounds of war were still bleeding freely, north and south; and people, individually, were stealing forth, as they could, to bear flowers to the grave of a loved one, a Mrs. John Tyler, of Columbus, Georgia, called together the women of her town, organized a Ladies' Memorial Association, went to Linwood Cemetery where formal memorial exercises were held. This was on April 26:1866. The women at that time solemnly pledged themselves to perform the same sweetly solemn task each year on the same day. Report has it that Mrs. John A. Logan, visiting in the South, learned of this custom, and urged her husband to introduce the custom in the North.

However it may be with respect to these reports, in the early spring of 1868, only a few years after the Civil War, General John A. Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, issued a call appealing to all the lovers of our reunited country to observe the thirtieth of May as Memorial Day. This was in memory of those who gave their lives for the preservation of the Union.

The observance of a Memorial Day is not a new thing in the earth. It is as old, practically, as human history. It is but a following of the bent of human life as long as there has been any thought, any reflection, on the significance of past events on the part of human beings. In the early days of Israel's history Moses, in recounting the experiences of his people, God's people, both in good and evil days, urges them to "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee." The evil experiences they were to remember as warnings. The experiences of good they were to remember as things to be appreciated, and imitated.

In these days we may well take to heart the words of Israel's great leader. In many instances Memorial Day is desecrated rather than commemorated. Races, and spectacular shows, promoted for profit, and endangering life are not in keeping with the true spirit of Memorial Day. It should be a sacred day, sacred to the memories of those who gave their lives for their country.

After the lapse of more than sixty years since the close of the Civil War, as we watch the thin and wavering line of the survivors of that great struggle, and pause reverently by the silent homes of those who have long since returned to dust, it will be highly profitable for us as citizens, and especially as Christian citizens, to do some reflecting, to recall some of the main events of our national history. But it is not enough just to remember past events, not enough, just to appreciate what others have done. We should study the causes that produce events. We should learn the lessons the events of history are intended to teach. And these lessons should prompt us to such action as wisdom dictates.

II.

Memorial Day. A day of remembrance. "Remember the days of old... Ask thy father, and he will show thee; thine elders, and they will tell thee."

What is it we are to remember? What is it of the past that we are to ask our fathers? I am minded to go back of the days of the sixties which tried men's souls. We can never understand the days of the sixties without understanding much beyond that time. I am thinking especially of the men and women who peopled this land in its early days. What was the predominant texture of these people? That there were adventurers among them no one questions. That there were those who were willing to lose their identity, and the threats hanging over their heads, in the wide-spaces, and freer atmosphere, of a new world, is equally beyond doubt. But adventure, and escape from merited repression, were the desires of but the few. Other elements formed the predominating texture in the lives of the great majority of the forefathers who wrested this fair and fruitful land from the grasp of the wilderness. They were men and women of high ideals. In the northeast and southeast, in the valleys and plateaus of the central east, the settlers were, in the main, those who fled the old world in pursuit of their ideas and ideals. They dared the cold of the North, the heat of the South, the fevers of the marshes, the wild beasts of unexplored forests, because they were lovers of liberty. The slow dragging processes of thousands of years of European history had brought home to the minds and hearts of these forebears of ours, before they left their native land, ideas of human worth, human equality, and human liberty, which the old world governments were not ready to grant them; and which it has taken other centuries of human travail to begin

to bring within the purview of most modern governments. There had been given to those early fathers of our country visions of hopes which they could see no prospects of ever realizing in the old homeland. So they became voyagers of hope; adventurers of faith in the fortunes of freedom; the vanguard of a new army, not primarily of fortune, though that was included; but of freedom and happiness.

With this love of freedom, both civil and religious, burning in their hearts; with the laudable desire to bequeath to their children, in body and spirit, what their parents could not bequeath to them, our forebears carved out for themselves a home on this new continent. And when the powers that be beyond the sea reached the hand of oppression across the waters, our fathers refused to yield, and struck down the hand that would have put chains on their dearly bought heritage of liberty; gave to the world their immortal Declaration of Independence; and, when their struggle ended victoriously, drew up, for the guidance, and continued security, of their children, our dearly prized Constitution. These antecedents we dare not forget in considering the struggles of later days.

These United States, I have no hesitancy in affirming, were a child of God's own begetting. With its almost unlimited resources this land became the Eldorado of the hungry peoples of the world. With its principles of democratic government, a government of the people, by the people, for the people, the United States became the Mecca of the aspiring, liberty-loving souls of all lands. Building on the solid foundation laid by the rare insight, and foresight, of our fathers, our country grew into the giant of the West. In all things the peer of all the nations of the earth.

The course of the United States' ship of state was not always over smooth waters. Her statesmen were not all paragons of virtue, neither in private nor public life. Some of them were gamblers and cutthroats. Not a few of them thought mostly of themselves, little of the people. As so often since, many of those who went in for public service had an eye mainly for prestige and perquisites. Parties were ruled by intriguing cliques of aspiring self-seekers.

The citizens of the new Republic were not all patriots. Selfishness played its part. Before our nation was a third of a century old, some of the northern states threatened to secede from the family of states because they

could not have their way. In the course of human events many perplexing problems had to be settled, not a few with difficulty. Our forebears had been wise, but not all-wise; they had built well, but not perfectly. Human nature again and again asserted itself, and human nature is essentially selfish. First in the North, and then more extensively in the South, slavery had been introduced; an importation of what was practiced in other lands; slavery, one of the ripest, blackest, most morally leprous fruits of human iniquity.

Along with slavery, and fostered by it, arose the agitation concerning the doctrine of states' rights; the troublesome question as to what are the rights and privileges of sovereign states within a confederacy of sovereign states. A question, by the way, which is not yet entirely settled to the satisfaction of all, either in the North, or in the South; the question, in either section, usually arising, not as a purely academic one, but when there is some special privilege they desire to exercise.

About the middle of the nineteenth century this question of slavery, and especially its extension into newly formed states and territories, became a burning one. It had become an immense economic, as well as moral, problem. Under the strain of circumstances, and the temper of the times, there seemed to be no way of settlement save by appeal to the sword. Alas, that this should ever be necessary among people who call themselves civilized, and many of them Christian. It would not be so if these things were not antedated by other mistakes which became bred into the blood, accepted as social institutions, and thus condoned.

For four long years the red, lurid war cloud hung low over this fair land, and spit forth its lightning flashes, accompanied with death-dealing showers of leaden hail. Eventually, after debts were incurred which are not yet all paid; after families and communities were split in twain, and enmities were fed and formed which took a half century of time, common dangers and conflicts measurably to ameliorate and dissipate; after hundreds of thousands of our country's men were slain, and other hundreds of thousands maimed, victory crowned the cause of the Federal Government: secession was put down as a thing unthinkable in this land of common destiny, and slavery abolished as a thing unbearable in this land of the free. Am I not safe in saying that there is not a sanely thinking person within the confines of these United States who does not today rejoice that the Union was preserved, that slavery was abolished?

This struggle, this sacrifice, this victory is the first thought of Memorial Day. Services of remembrance like this, the sweet flowers we lay on the graves of those who paid the price for the blessings we enjoy, is just a fractional payment of the debt of gratitude we owe.

III.

Assuredly, however, we have not done all we should do when we have lovingly, reverently laid a flower on the grave of a father, or grandfather, husband or brother who gave his life for the land he loved, and we love. "Remember the days of old. Ask thy father, and he will show thee; thine elders, and they will tell thee." Surely they would point out some lessons from the days of old for today and tomorrow; some dangers to be avoided, some things to arouse us to resolution and action.

The first thing that comes to my mind, as a legitimate result of a thoughtful, reverent observance of Memorial Day, is this: The cost of whatever is worthwhile. Our land, in what it has become; our institutions, our government, did not just happen to be what they are. I believe they are what they are by the providentially guiding hand of God, who watches over the migratory flight of the swallow, and the rest of the dormouse in its winter refuge. But what we have as citizens was not thrown as a largess into our lap. What we have cost something, they cost a prodigious amount. They cost not only calloused hands, weary muscles, and aching backs; they cost the birth throes of some of the keenest thinking of some of the sanest minds the world has produced in the past thousand years. They cost the travail of soul, and the bloody sweat, of hundreds of thousands of the most patriotic men that this, or any other, country has ever produced.

If these blessings are to be preserved for ourselves, if they are to be transmitted as a glorious and untarnished heritage to our children, and their children of generations yet unborn, it is not going to be without cost. Let us pray that it may be without the cost of bloody strife. But it cannot be without cost. We cannot sit down, fold our hands, and keep what we have. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. One great lesson the citizens of this country need to learn is that the affairs of government do not run themselves, and especially not, to the interests of the great mass of mankind. Now, as ever, scheming politicians, of all parties, are scheming,

not for the common weal, but for their own pockets. This land is a republic, a democracy; a land which it was designed the people should rule, for the good of all the people. Instead of this two-thirds of us are led around by the nose by designing politicians. Most of us are little concerned about issues, not even enough to vote, unless we think they are going to affect our pocket book. Many of us are Christian people, but we seldom give a thought as to the implications of Christian citizenship in a democracy. We have been wont to speak with considerable spread-eagle oratory, about the fact that each American is a sovereign. A sovereign, indeed! Two-thirds of them could not repeat two lines of the Constitution. And one-half of them have never entertained an intelligent thought on what constitutes constructive citizenship in a land such as is ours, at least theoretically.

We are citizens of a great country, of a great government. Our domain is widespreading. Our interests are diversified; consequently there is bound to be some conflict. As a people we need to learn that it can only be by the exercise of a large degree of self-restraint, of mutual forbearance, and brotherly unselfishness, which surrenders something of the personal and local for the sake of the larger good, that we can have general peace and prosperity. In a country where majorities rule, we need to learn more fully that, in matters involving only tastes and desires, not actually suppressing conscience, when the majority has spoken it is the duty of the minority to fall in line and obey the verdict, and to do this while the verdict stands, even though they may, in legitimate ways, seek to change the verdict. Only thus can a democracy stand and flourish.

“Ask thy father, and he will show thee; thine elders, and they will tell thee.” Another thing the voice of the fathers will plainly tell us is that if, in government, as well as in individual life, we want to build substantially, and for the ages, we have got to build righteously. There is a word of the prophet to Israel of old that has application here. He says: “The Lord is with you, while ye are with Him. And if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you... And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries. And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city; for God did vex them with adversity.” This is the story of all history. The cataclysms in national life like the French Revolution, the Russian debacle, and lesser events of like nature in

practically all nations, do not come out of a clear sky. They all come as the result of forces operating, generally, for generations. They are the natural volcanic outbreak of human energies oppressed, and suppressed, for years. The Revolution, probably, never would have been if England had not made exactions, and offered indignities, which decent, enlightened, liberty loving people could not endure. There would have been no Civil War had not crafty politicians, north and south, fomented sectional rivalry and enmity for personal advancement, and gain. And above all if selfish capital, north and south, had not originally connived at the planting of that child of Satan, slavery, on American soil. The parents having sown the seed, the children had to reap the harvest. The parents having sown the wind, the children had to reap the whirlwind. The same principle still prevails, and will while the world stands. This is the reason we cannot rest on our oars. We are never justified in feeling that everything has been fixed, settled; and that it will remain so indefinitely. We will have to fight to keep what our fathers fought to win. The only things worth winning, and worth keeping; the only things that ever really made us great, or that will keep us great, are the things God approves. The truest patriotism is the fear and love of God. The truest service we can render to home and school and state is to adopt, and live, the principles of the God of righteousness.

We have celebrated another Memorial Day. We have remembered the days of old. We have paid our tribute of flowers. We have felt, I trust, some throbs of gratitude for the sacrifices made for us. Now let us dedicate ourselves anew to the land we love. Let us thank God for the men who were willing to die for the land they loved. In the next breath let us dedicate ourselves to live for the land we love. And dedicate ourselves to live for those things which never breed animosity and strife, except on the part of those who would be outlawed by all decent people and countries.

God save our native land,
And make her strong to stand
For truth and right.
Long may her banner wave,
Flag of the free and brave!
Thou who alone canst save,
Grant her Thy might.
In living unity

May all her people be
Kept evermore.
From here on every side
May freedom's swelling tide
Roll grandly, far and wide,
To ev'ry shore.

The Heroism Of The Man Of Peace. (Memorial Service For The Columbus Fire Department)

Remember this, and show yourselves men...

Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me.

ISAIAH 46:8-9.

THIS IS MEMORIAL DAY. As its name indicates, it is a day dedicated very largely to memories. It was, originally, a day sacred to the memory of the soldiers of the North in the Civil War. Now it is a day with practically a national appeal. And, by common consent, the soldiers of all our wars are included when graves are decorated, and services held. Further, and I think rightly so, Memorial Day has become a favorite time for showing special respect to the fallen comrades of every worthy cause. And even those who have served no special cause, only the great cause of humanity; which is the greatest cause of all.

It is fitting that you, the firemen of our city, should decorate the graves of your fallen comrades, keep alive their memories, cherish their virtues; and hold a joint service, not only in their memory, but at which we, the living, may receive, encouragement, inspiration, and strength for the good fight which every one of us is called to make.

In the name of our congregation, I want to extend to you men of the Fire Department, and your friends, a hearty, welcome to this service. Your chief is an esteemed member of our congregation. So are several members. of

your Department. We are glad to have you worship with them, and with us. And we are pleased to conduct this service especially for you.

Today, at least at this service, we are not going, especially, to remember the heroes of war; but the heroes of peace; not the loyalty of those who kill and destroy, but the loyalty of those who protect and save. Let us think together on this Memorial Day along a line that will give prominence, and emphasis, to the heroism of the man of peace. Not confining ourselves very closely to our theme, we will consider the day as a day of remembrance, a day of hope, and a day of resolution.

I.

This is a day of remembrance. Twice, in two verses, our text says: Remember. And, before we go any further, I want to tell you what our text is talking about when it says: Remember. It is not a good thing for a preacher, or a speaker of any kind, to forget his text.

The prophet Isaiah wanted to teach his people an important lesson. They needed it. Many of them were wool-gathering. Some were clearly going astray. What the prophet did was to call the attention of the people to some recent history. That is always one of the best arguments. Show people how things work out in actual life. Some people have difficulty in applying principles, but are able to construe facts. Look at Babylon, the prophet says. The people there made themselves false gods, gods of gold and silver, wrought with their own hands. They fell down before them. They put their trust in them. Now what has happened? Those people have been overthrown. Their very gods have been pried from their pedestals, and carried away by their conquerors as so much treasure, on the backs of dumb beasts. Now, the prophet says to his own people, who had been misled: Remember this. Learn your lesson. Be wise. Act like men. Do not put your confidence in absurd things which cannot help in time of need.

To these same people, the prophet says a second time: Remember the former days. Remember your God. There is no God like Him. He is not a creature carved out of metal by the hand of man. He Himself is the great Creator. Remember what He has done for your fathers; how He led them, protected them, strengthened them, established them, fed them, corrected

them when they were wrong, and, in the end, always gave them the victory, - when they were right. Remember this, and be men.

The world, and the United States of America, needs to learn this lesson. We need to learn the utter falsity of some of the gods we have been setting up; that some of the people have been trying to set up. We have venerated ourselves with gold, and we have smeared ourselves with oil. And there are those who would say: These be thy gods, O America. And there is an element that wants to make gods of battleships, and a big army. And there is another element that wants to make a god out of this nation, so as to make it appear that it has a right to interfere in the business of weaker nations. Professedly, on invitation to give them clean, honest elections; when God knows their elections could hardly be more rotten, or dishonest, than some of our own. Professedly, I say to give these people clean, honest elections; in reality, as many are convinced, to protect the money investments of the big interests. Watch your gods, O citizens of this land. Act like men.

Memorial Day is a day of remembrance. With this day we associate, very largely, the beat of drums, the march of soldiery, the peal of cannon, and the havoc of the battlefield. And this relic of savagery, this glorification of barbarism, this devil's work, has caught the imagination of the nations down through the ages. It is a herculean task to dethrone this false god. Until recent times, it seems, there were comparatively few who considered it possible for a man to be a patriot of the highest type, or a really worthwhile hero, unless he was a soldier, a man of blood. And, though a man may have been good for nothing else than to fight, it has been the fashion to hold these up as our superlative national heroes.

I am not one of those who is too proud to fight, or ashamed to fight, or afraid to fight, if there must be a fight. Some of my people have been soldiers in every war since, and including, the Revolution. In early youth I myself was determined to be a soldier. So far as the pull of the blood is concerned, I still, at times, feel the call of the drum, and the beat, beat of marching feet. But I am seeking to be led of the Spirit of God, and I know that. the Spirit of Jesus Christ is as much against this monstrous thing of killing people by wholesale as He is against individual killing individual. And I am going to make legitimate war on illegitimate war as long as I live.

There may be circumstances when a nation may have to fight, may be justified in fighting. If such a time comes in our land, I will never be too old to ask exemption. But it will still be a shame, a crying shame, a shame to our civilization, when such a thing has to be. And no language of man can describe the devilry of it, when war is waged, as most wars are waged, as the result of scheming politicians and buccaneers to protect the millions of the big interests, while the leaders of the big interests practice graft and further spoliation, and the poor man fights and dies,-and gets a flower, and is called a patriot hero.

If, in the cause of real justice, and down-trodden humanity, war must be, even then the angels of Heaven weep, and the spirits of hell rejoice.

Contrary to the old prevailing idea, we are learning, slowly, painfully, laboriously, learning, that there can be just as much patriotism, and just as much heroism, in the ordinary walks of life, and the ordinary things of life, as there can be on the field of battle.

The fireman, who responds promptly, and whole heartedly, to the call of threatening danger and loss; who unhesitatingly assumes a position of duty where his life is in danger; who is quick to respond to the call to further effort, and greater danger, to rescue life, even the life of the perfect stranger; is his not a noble loyalty? and is his conduct not as heroic as that of the man who faces, possibly, a quicker, and an easier, death on the field of battle? Let us give credit where credit is due. Not only on the field of battle; but in the more common walks of life, we are called on to remember, and be men.

This is a day of memories. It is a day which calls for the backward look. On this day we are called on, in a special way, to remember our dear ones, our comrades, our fellow-workers, who have fallen in the conflict. We are asked to put a flower on each one's resting place; to think of them kindly; to keep alive their memories; to cherish their virtues; to forget their frailties; to shoulder their burdens; to keep our eyes to the front, and march onward, ever onward; real men, real women; living for God and humanity.

II.

Memorial Day is a day of memories. It is more, it is a day of hope as well.

Memorial Day is a day of solemn, serious thoughts. Even when we go back sixty years, and think of the men who, in the flower of their manhood, fell on the field of battle; fighting, not only for themselves, but for us, our children, and our children's children; our hearts are still stirred with feelings of admiration, and of sympathy. And, of course, the farther down the path of time we come, the fresher are the wounds, and the keener is the grief. And the same is equally true of those who have fallen in the line of duty other than that of the soldier.

I understand that representatives of your number have visited the cemetery, and, in the name of all, have placed your sweet-scented tribute of respect on the graves of those whose bodies sleep in the embrace of old mother earth. Throughout the length and breadth of this great land of ours similar deeds have been done. And many a tear, of which no one, not even the manliest, need be ashamed, has been shed.

And yet amid all our serious thoughts, and unashamed tears, is it not true that there is something which whispers of hope to our hearts? In these spring days, when earth is renewing itself, the very flowers breathe a whisper of hope. All nature says to us: Life, not death, is in the ascendancy; life, not death, shall ultimately triumph. It is an echo of the words of the inspired Apostle: O death, where is thy victory?

Death is, in itself, the very opposite of all that is attractive. It is the negation of life, of beauty, of joy, of happiness. Death is a destroyer. It is appropriately called the king of terrors. It strikes at our hearts. It tears from us our treasures. To all present appearances, what is more cruel than the grave?

In spite of all this, when we walk amid our graves, and strew them with flowers, it means more than just this that memory lives, more than this that love still lingers. Whether we realize it or not, this treasuring of the graves of our departed is bound up with a hope that will not die, the hope that our dead are not dead forever.

And that which our own hearts affirm, and nature hints at, that God's revelation, in word and deed, makes eternally sure. Death, that has chained our loved ones to his chariot, and led them away to his stronghold, has done this only with their bodies; and only for a time.

The Word of God clearly teaches us that the life principle in us, the soul, the mind; that which is our real self, never dies. What we call death is only a separation, a liberation. The soul, the life, is set free. Only the body, the house in which we live, and that has grown weary of toils and pains, is dismantled for a while. It is a process of purification, of being made ready for reconstruction. For the Word tells us that even our bodies are to be raised by the Almighty power of God, reunited with the, temporarily, liberated spirit; and then, perfected and beautified, to go on forever, in the beauty of holiness, and the joy of blessedness.

Jesus Christ, the God-man, the perfect link between God and man, has passed through all this; He has demonstrated its possibility. He stands before the world and says: "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "Because I live, ye shall live also." But Jesus Christ does much more than this. All men shall live forever. There is no way of escaping it. Jesus has come, the friend of men, to fit them for a life of beauty and blessedness. He does this in two ways. He is loving, merciful; a true-hearted brother. He forgives, He removes all our imperfections; and He gives, gives us all the beauty, and all the perfection, He has in His own wonderful life. And He does this with all impartiality. He gives these blessings to all who come and desire them, and accept them in simple faith.

So this Memorial Day is to be, not merely a day of memories; but a day of hope; not only a day of tears, tears born of tender mercies; but a day of holy joy, begotten of new visions. And all based on the solid rock of the power and goodness of the Son of God.

III.

Memorial Day is a day of memories, and a day of hope. It should also be a day of high and holy resolution, a day of dedication, of rededication.

Shall our dead have died in vain? This is one of the days when, with all propriety, we may use the words of our text: Remember this, and show yourselves men.

Any Memorial Day service which does not attempt at least to lead the participants to catch the spirit of the day, and resolve to share in the high

and holy values this day represents, is a failure, so far as any worthwhile results are concerned.

Let us take the thought for which Memorial Day first of all stands, — loyalty, patriotism, love of country, devotion to its ideals and principles. What is the value of recalling all these things, of proclaiming what they are worth to mankind, of declaring what a grand thing it is to give one's life for these things, unless we mean what we say. And if we mean what we say, we should light our candle at the flame on the altar. We should dedicate ourselves anew to the service of everything that is worthwhile and noble in our land, its institutions, and government.

We boast that this is a government of the people, by the people, for the people. Let us see to it that it is such a government in fact, and not only during campaign seasons, and in the speeches of those who are seeking profit and preferment. A government like ours makes demands on its people such as does no other government in the world. In a government by the people, the final deposit of sovereignty is in the individual. And each man and woman, by his or her wisdom, or unwisdom; by his or her interest, or lack of interest; by his or her faithfulness, or faithlessness; each man and woman, I say, helps determine the nature and standard of government. With so many of our people caring only for our country as a place of opportunity; with so many caring for the government only because, and in so far, as it gives them protection in their schemes of self-advancement, it is no wonder that so many of the places of prominence in our land are occupied by crooks; no wonder that so many of our laws are administered to exploit the poor, and protect the big vandals.

Let each Memorial Day be a new birthday of loyalty, not mere party loyalty; but national loyalty, loyalty to government. Government is of God. And citizenship is the next thing to religion. Indeed, citizenship and religion, when they are both rightly understood, are closely related. We are to render unto government that which is due to government, and unto God that which is due to God.

Let us take the thought that is uppermost in our minds at this particular service today, -the tribute of respect to our departed fellow-citizens, your comrades, and fellow-workers. Do we feel that a flower, and a thought, however kindly, discharges all our obligation to them? I do not think so. All

that was noble in those we remember, every example of devotion to duty they gave, every self-sacrificing service they rendered, is a call to us to imitate their example, to carry on in their stead, to finish the work they began.

We have spoken of the fact that part of the service of today is a visit to the place where rest those whom we have loved and lost. Is there nothing in this which ought to be provocative of resolution? Does not every mound in the cemetery have a message for us? Is there not a silent voice from each silent sleeper saying: As I am now so you soon shall be? This should not depress us. It is not something about which to mope. But it is something to arouse us. It is something to put us to work with a will, for every day our time is getting shorter. And our tasks should be finished, finished in such a way as to leave a worthy example for those who follow us. Remember this, and be men.

Let us keep our covenant with our dead; let us be true to them. Let us stand by the ancient foundations laid by God, cherished by our fathers—the home, the school, the government, the church. Serious breaches have been made in some of these foundations; let us seek to repair them. Let us build the things that endure. This is the call that comes to every one of us on Memorial Day.

Men of the Columbus Fire Department, we, your fellow-citizens, recognize the service you are rendering our city; faithfully, often in the face of much danger. We feel that there is a large degree of public spirit in your service, for your compensation is inadequate. May we, who represent the community, bespeak our sense of fellow-feeling in your Memorial Day service. And may we speak a word of appreciation to you, the living men of the department, while you are alive. A flower to the living, especially where it is deserved, is worth two to the dead. Several years ago we had a considerable fire here in this building. Some of you, no doubt, were here, and we know how vigorously, and faithfully, you took hold of your task. At this late date, let us thank you.

Once more, men of the Department, I want to say that I know the religious relationships, and professions, of very few of you. That makes no great difference to me. But I do want to leave with you a parting word. We are living today, you and I. There are big tasks before us, and life is full of

dangers. A year from now some one may be putting flowers on our new home. That thought does not give me one moment's worry. But until that time does come, I want to be found doing my duty. And when that time comes, I want to be ready. There are a good many things which help to enthuse men, and keep them keyed up to their best efforts. But the noblest of all manhood, the finest of all ideals of life and service, and the greatest source of strength, and hope, comes from intimate companionship with Jesus Christ as friend and Savior. Remember this, and show yourselves men. Amen.

Mother's Day.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee.

EPHESIANS 6:1-3.

THIS LITTLE TEXT is a New Testament statement of the fourth commandment. In my treatment of it I am going to adapt it to the day we are observing, — Mother's Day.

When I was younger, a favorite pastime with a good many women was that of working mottoes, on a perforated cardboard, out of varicolored yarn. One of the favorite mottoes of that day, in our part of the country, was: "What is Home Without a Father." When I close my eyes, I can still see the one which hung in the home of my grandfather, with whom I lived. He was one of those who deserved the motto. But they have long since disappeared. I hope the spirit of the thing has not gone with the motto.

Instead of the old motto, we now have Mother's Day. Yes, Mother's Day, at least to the extent of having a day set aside in which we sing her praises, extol her virtues, recall her services, and pledge her anew our affection. I trust Mother's Day will not go the way of father's motto.

Mother's Day! A mother's day service! Surely, such a day, and such a service, has a universal appeal. Surely, few hearts are so dead, few lives so earthbound, that they are not touched by the mention of one of the sweetest of all words—Mother.

Mother's Day should mean much not only to sons and daughters, young or old; it ought to mean much to mothers themselves. This tribute to mother-love, and mother-devotion, should not only gratify them, it should lead them to the renewal of holy resolves, it should lead them anew to

dedicate themselves to all the holy, and eternally worthwhile things that are comprised in the sacred word—mother.

Some of us are older, and have no mother living. Some are younger and have their mothers with them. Let us live over again the experiences stored in the treasure-house of memory: As a result we may come to some new evaluations, in our hearts pay an old debt, or resolve in the future to discharge a present obligation.

Let us think, reflect, speak today in the first person. Let each one think of his or her own mother, and make this, my Mother's Day. Let us face our own shortcomings; or rejoice, as the case may be, in the consciousness of duty well done. I am going to take as my subject the refrain of one of Kipling's ballads: *Mother O' Mine*.

Mother's Day

“Thou shalt honor thy mother.” “Mother O' Mine.” At once there is something here that grips the heart. I do not care how old you are, you may be a father, or mother, yourself; or a grandfather, a grandmother, for that matter; but at the mention of this one word—mother—there flashes up memories of the long ago; memories of the unstained days, memories of the days when life bore no serious battle scars, memories of the days when most of our ills were cured by the caressing touch of a mother's hand, and the benediction of a mother's kiss.

Some of us have walked pretty well along on the road of life; some are still in the thick of the fight; some of us have little ones of our own prattling around our knees; some are heart-hungry, the birds having flown the nest, and think but little of the old home; but is it not true that those early, faintly remembered, days, have a hold on our hearts that few other things have. Because of this, and because of the disillusionment, and heartaches, the later days have brought, many a one has joined, in spirit at least, in the passionate cry:

“Turn backward, turn backward,
O time in your flight;
Make me a child again,
Just for tonight.”

I am quite sure that, if we carefully analyze our feelings, we will find that the greater part of the attachment with which we cling to the memories of childhood, and the pleasures we associate with those days, is due to one outstanding factor, — mother, mother's love and care. This is the reason that the mere mention of Mother's Day at once touches the heart-string of practically every one.

Mother

Mother! There is something solemnly and sweetly sacred in the very sound of the world-old word — Mother. It falls on the ear like the cadence of mellow chimes in the vine-covered tower of some dear old church when we are in specially worshipful mood. Mother! This is one of a trinity of words which, by their very euphony, as well as by the association of ideas, seem predestined to go together: Mother, home, and heaven.

Mother it was who went down very close to the valley of the shadow to give us life. She it is who has given to us more of her heart's blood than any other human being. Not only in the literal sense; but in the sense of used up energies; in the way of cares, anxieties, hopes and fears. She it was to whom we carried our troubles. She it was who carried our troubles. She it was who constantly sought to allay our fears, and smooth away our difficulties.

To the real mother her child is not only a creature fashioned out of her own life-substance, her heart-strings are entwined with every atom of that child's being. Her child is her treasure. She continues to give her life to it; sometimes profligately, but always sacrificially. In her own heart she anticipates her child's dangers and pains; in her own life she anticipates her child's battles, suffers in its defeats, exults in its victories.

Is this just Mother's Day talk? A little posy to please mother on one day in the year? Many of the most beautiful pictures in the world are mother pictures. Much of the finest literature in the world consists of pen pictures of mothers, sings the praises of motherhood, mother-love, and motherly virtues. Surely all this cannot be the product of a superficial, evanescent sentiment. There is something here that goes far down beneath the surface, something that strikes its roots down into the deep, central forces of human life; and the fires of human action. Mothers, mother-love, motherly

solicitude and care; all these things in their best estate, is a wise provision of divine wisdom and love. In this way a daily miracle is wrought before our eyes, largely unseeing eyes. Mothers are the continuators of the primary miracle of human life. Mother-love, and the devotion which springs therefrom, is not just a luxury bestowed on womankind by which they may feed the cravings of their feminine natures. It is a God-given heritage, bestowed that it might be one of the most powerful, and far-reaching, earthly forces in all the rich and far flung sphere of human life, and human destiny.

Of all things human, there is no picture that comes so near to representing the divine presence; the loving, brooding spirit of the great Father of us all, as that of a loving, devout mother bending over the child of her own flesh and blood, the child of her love, and her prayers. I cannot forget, when I ponder these things, that God Almighty, when He wanted to send a Savior, who had to be a man, selected a good, clean, loving, devout woman to be the human mother of the Christ.

Mother! The light of love, the spark of hope; the fire of consecration to a self-forgetful, sacrificial, self-consuming service burns in her eyes; and lights her face with a beauty not wholly of the earth. Faith that yet trembles on the borderland of inexpressible fears; reverence in the presence of inexpressible mysteries, speak forth from every action, and stand written in every lineament of the true mother's spirit-filled face.

Be it understood, I am speaking now, not of every woman who has happened to bear a child, willingly, or against her will; I am speaking of real mothers, mothers who have entered into partnership with God in his work, like the Elizabeths, Marys, Anthusas, and Monicas of old. And I include in this number a great many women who have never held a child of their own in their arms; that large number of women, teachers, nurses, and others; women with real motherly hearts, who, in the school and out of it, in the home and out of it, have given a mother's love, and a mother's care, to those not their own. They too shall wear the mother's crown.

Mother's Influence

If only a fraction of what has been said about mothers be true, what a wonderful influence mothers must exert in the world.

Until comparatively recent times, woman has occupied a subordinate position in a great part of the world. But the truth of the matter is that she has nearly always been the ruler of the rulers of the world. Of all womanly influence, the most constant, the widest spread, the farthest reaching, the most cumulative, is mother influence. Every one of us has a mother. And, with few exceptions, it was mother's influence which was predominant in molding our lives. Disguise it as you may, deny it if you will, it is the wife and mother who predominantly creates the home atmosphere. And nine times out of ten the home is the largest determining factor in shaping the lives of men and women. All of this is the result of the very nature of the case. The mother makes the home, she lives there; the father sleeps there, and, in the city, only part of the time, eats there. The mother lives with the children, she is their constant adviser; the father visits with them occasionally.

Because of all this, the character of our citizenship, in all the wide range where real manhood and womanhood is demanded; and where moral character; or its lack, is constantly exhibited; the character of our general social life; the nature of the new homes that are being established; and the very texture of the Church itself; all of this is being very largely determined by the mothers and the homes of the day. What a strategic and vital part mothers play in the whole life of mankind.

We are not attempting to rhapsodize on a subject of tender sentiment for effect. This is not a mere gallant courtesy that a man is supposed to pay to womankind, and mothers particularly, on this day. They are the words of truth and soberness, borne out by all the history of the race. There have been bad women. There are bad women today, women who are a disgrace to womankind. But good women, and good mothers, predominate; and they are the salvation of the race. History is full of the evidence of the influence of the good mother. Time fails us to give any number of the statements of great and good men on this subject. We are going to let one representative statement suffice. It is the testimony of a non-Christian man to the character of the Christian woman in general, and the Christian mother in particular. Libanus, the distinguished head of the great pagan school at Antioch, contemplating the character, aims, and service of Anthusa, the mother of Chrysostom, exclaimed with enthusiastic admiration: "What women these Christians have." Libanus said more than he knew in these words. Only a

Christian woman with high ideals of life and service, who draws her inspiration and strength from Jesus Christ, can be the highest type of woman, and mother.

Mother's Responsibility

What a responsibility this puts on the shoulders of mothers. We talk about the men who are the pathfinders, the empire builders, the statesmen, the warriors, the educators of men. All honor to them. But the sacrifices of mothers have made all this possible. Mothers are the builders of empire builders; mothers, by their wise, firm policies, and sage advice, make statesmen; mothers, with their simple, firm faith; their love of truth and righteousness, their sincere unaffected piety; their unswerving loyalty in every good cause, are largely the trainers of educators, of statesman, ministers of the Gospel, and the workers in every righteous cause.

Richard Cecil, in a former day, one of London's eminent divines, tells us that in his early days he tried his hardest to be an unbeliever. He would tear himself away from his home, and his godly mother, with a suppressed oath on his lips. He wanted to be free, have his fling with the world. Every time he did this grief and shame overcame him. His mother's beautiful and appealing life was too much for him. No argument could reach that kind of evidence. It was a present, living, undeniable reality. And it gave evidence of being fed and nourished from some hidden fountain. A mother's love, a mother's beautiful life, reinforced and sustained by the grace of God, was a combination Cecil could not long successfully resist. In course of time he became not only a worthy Christian gentleman, but a consecrated preacher of power and influence. I judge that most religious workers are made such very largely by their mothers.

Some of you have heard of Henry W. Grady. Not many years ago he was one of the Southland's most brilliant, and best loved, journalists. He was the editor of the Atlanta Constitution. Brilliant man that Grady was, like many another, he had come from a simple home, in which, in the simple ways of old, Grady's mother still lived, when he was at the height of his career.

Grady, now dead, once told how, in the limelight of public life, in the storm and stress of everyday editorial duties, and the general press of a materialistic age, he felt himself slipping spiritually. The great spiritual

verities were becoming less real to him. And he had enough discernment to realize that this would mean an irreparable loss to his own life. What did Grady do in this soul-crisis? Seek out some great theologian? Go to hear some widely heralded preacher? It is not impossible that they might have helped him. They probably would. What Grady did was to go to the one in whose fundamental religious experiences, and spiritual intuitions, and words of advice, he had still more confidence. He went back to the simple old home, he listened to mother's evening Bible reading, and her simple prayers; he saw the light of faith and love and hope as it radiated from her life. He asked her to treat him as she did in the dear dead days of the long ago, when he was her little boy. She heard his faltering evening prayer. She sent him to bed with the benediction of her mother-kiss. And Grady affirmed that ere long he went back to Atlanta, and his work, with a new song in his heart, and a new light in his eyes. His mother's God had found him again.

Any one with a little training can in some measure, at least, parry arguments with counter arguments. But there is one thing which cannot be explained away: a life that has found God, and has been transfigured by His abiding presence and power, and, under the influence of that abiding presence, is constantly growing in strength, and peace, and beauty.

Mothers, this is your golden opportunity. Not that it is yours alone. In some degree, it is the opportunity, and obligation, of every one of us. But there is no one who can step into a true mother's place. No one has quite the grip on a child's heart, life, like that of a true mother. O godly, Christian mother, this is your throne of power. It may sometimes seem more like a crucifixion than a coronation; but, under God, all this may be tied up with the redemptive force of the world.

Mothers be at pains to learn the extent of your far-reaching influence; for good or ill. You know something of what the home means to our nation. You know what intelligent, patriotic citizens mean to our state and government. You are believers in God and His Christ, and in the Church as the institution through which alone the children of men attain the great eternal good; and which undergirds every noble, worthwhile earthly cause. And you mothers wield the greatest human power on earth for keeping these things what they ought to be. If you are lovers of humanity, and of that in humanity which is good, and true, and pure, and lovely, and of good

report, gird yourselves with every resource of grace that you may meet, with human and divine approval, your great and glorious responsibility.

In the bright realm of glory, the ever distinguishing mark of our estate will be the crown of grace which the loving hand of the ever loving Father will place on the brow of those who have believed in His love, and accepted the provisions of His love; but the gems in this crown, in their number, and in their brilliancy, will be determined largely by the way we have taken what grace has offered, and with them met the issues of life in our earthly pilgrimage. Of all the bright gems in the crowns of the heroes and heroines of the faith, none will be more scintillatingly bright than those worn by the faithful mothers of men; mothers in the flesh, mothers in the faith.

The Child's Reciprocal Responsibility

This is Mother's Day; a day dedicated to mothers, living and translated. Should all our words be spoken only to mothers, and of them? So far I have done only this. Frankly, I aim to glorify motherhood, and magnify mother's sphere, and mother's influence. The good mother deserves all the praise we can give her. She needs all the encouragement we can give her. Just as we all need all the strength, all the inspiration, we can get to enable us worthily to meet the pressing responsibilities of life. But from what we have said of mothers, mother's influence, mother's responsibility, and we have not exaggerated, it ought to be clear that this imposes on all who look up to mother a counter responsibility.

The program for today calls for the wearing of a flower in memory of mother. And many a man who seems to be absorbed in business, and wholly unemotional, will be seen wearing this token; and in his heart there will be a tender spot, and his eyes will be moist, as memory goes back to the dear old mother whom he has not seen for a score of years, and whom he will never see again in this world; but whose face and life is still enshrined in his mind and heart. This is a fine one day program. But there are three hundred and sixty-five days in the year. And mother should be remembered every day. If she is living no effort, no attention, ought to be considered too much to keep her mindful of our tender regard.

The words of our text were written especially for children and young people. It says: Obey your parents. This, in our day, is considered an old-

fashioned, and, by many, an out-of-date, precept. But if mother is wise only with the fear of God, and the wisdom born of mother-love and experience, there is no one, save the Son of Man, to whom it will be more profitable for you to give heed. Mother may not have the widest possible fund of modern knowledge, some of which is not yet proven to be knowledge; but if she is a mother in Israel, her greatest concern is for your safety, in body and soul. You may feel that she is old-fashioned. Virtue, and self-respect, and concern for the future, and many other things, are considered old-fashioned by a good many; but you had better obey the good old-fashioned advice of your mother. It is better to be considered old-fashioned, than, in later years, to spend your nights in weeping bitter tears; and to have in your breast a heart that weeps blood. A wiser than the wisest of mothers has said: "The companion of fools shall be destroyed."

Let us all make some new resolves today. Mothers you are God's representatives to the races of men in their most formative period. You cannot over-estimate the importance of your position. Do not become opinionated. Do not think that by mere intuition it is possible to know everything. You should be an ever growing woman; in mind, spirit, character. Do not drive, lead. Lead by the magic power of a God-fearing, God-loving, humanity-serving, ever growing life.

And let all of us resolve today anew to honor motherhood, and all godly mothers. If mother has gone to glory, let us keep her memory green, let us continue to live in the spirit of her precepts, and exemplify her virtues. If mother is living it is very easy to become forgetful, and neglectful; not purposely but by press of duties, and growth of habit. When years multiply, and the young folks leave home to establish homes of their own, it is so easy to forget. And the mother-heart becomes lonely, and hungry, for companionship, and affection. If you are away, do not fail to write that letter. If you are within reach, do not fail, at stated intervals, to pay that visit. Under any circumstances, let us not neglect those little words those little tokens, that mean so much to anxious loving hearts. What we all need to make us better mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, children, citizens is more of the redeeming, transforming spirit of the great brother and Savior of men. His presence and influence ennobles and beautifies every life and every relationship.

And now we will close with this prayer for Mothers' Day by Henry Van Dyke:

Lord Jesus, Thou hast known
A mother's love and tender care,
And Thou wilt hear, while for my own
Mother most dear I make this birthday prayer.
Protect her life, I pray,
Who gave the gift of life to me;
And may she know, from day to day,
The deepening glow of Life that comes from Thee.
As once upon her breast
Fearless and well content I lay,
So let her heart, on Thee at rest,
Feel fears depart and troubles fade away.
Ah, hold her by the hand,
As once her hand held mine;
And though she may not understand
Life's winding way, lead her in peace divine.
I cannot pay my debt
For all the love that she has give;
But Thou, love's Lord, wilt not forget,
Her due reward—bless her in earth and heaven.

Amen.

National Music Week. The Music Of The Sanctuary.

Rejoice in Jehovah, O ye righteous:
Praise is comely for the upright.
Give thanks unto Jehovah with the harp:
Sing praises unto Him with the psaltery of ten strings.
Sing unto him a new song;
Play skilfully with a loud noise.

PSALM 33:1-3.

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

MATTHEW 26:30.

Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.

EPHESIANS 5:19.

THERE IS DANGER of the over-multiplication of special days and seasons in which the Church is asked to join. I feel, however, that it was a happy inspiration which led to the establishment of National Music Week. We have a National Educational Week; and no good citizen, and no good churchman, can be indifferent to that subject. Music, as in ancient Greece, has now a place in our educational program, and is decidedly a part of our religious program; so it may, very appropriately, be considered by us.

Never before, in the history of the world, has music entered so generally into the life of the people. We have not only the musical instruments

formerly in use; but the phonograph and the radio bring everything of a musical character into the majority of our homes, not only in the city, but in the country as well. All the more reason, this, why we should be careful of the music for which we cultivate a taste.

The music of a people is an unfailing index of their culture, and their morals as well. Listen to a people's music, the songs they like to hear, sing, play, and you have an insight into that people's life; whether it is superficial, frothy, vulgar, sensual; or deep, thoughtful, aspiring. Because of this the Church should be interested in a movement like this, and encourage it. Those sponsoring this movement wish it to be known as better music week. And the Church should be interested in everything that affects the aesthetic and moral side of human life in general.

The Church's chief interest in any movement for better music is for her own sake. The music of the Church is intended to occupy a place in the services of the Church, and in the life of Christian people, which, it is to be feared, is at variance with the ideas even of a great many of her own people. Too many Church people consider music in the Church as an accidental thing, an afterthought. Nothing is farther from the truth. If they really knew the nature of music, its history, its God-designed place, and function, in the services of religion, they would regard the matter in a different way. Not forgetting, then, to say a good word for better music everywhere, let us today make something of a study of The Music of the Sanctuary.

I.

Without attempting a technical discussion, let us give a little thought to the subject of music in general.

What is music? Is it merely tone, form, association, symbolization? Is it merely a beautiful play of sounds? Of all the cultural elements with which human life has to deal, music is the most difficult exactly to define. And when attempted scarcely any two definitions agree. Perhaps no adequate definition can be given. The reason is that music deals with, is a part of, all that is deepest, and most subtle, in nature, and the life of man. So far as man is concerned, music is, primarily, the language of his emotional life, and the emotional life is the most difficult side of man's life to analyze, and classify. To some extent, every human being has feelings, longings,

glimpses of spiritual entities, that are too delicate and sensitive to be caught and given adequate expression in the somewhat clumsy garb of thought which words provide. Pain, grief, despair, pleasure, joy, hope, are all somewhat of this nature. Here is where music comes into its own. Music, which is of the inner nature of things, from God Himself down to the farthest play of natural forces, is the language of the inner life, the feelings. In music the cry of the soul, whether of anguish, or of exultant joy, oft finds its best expression. Music is the language that reaches into higher spheres, and voices more delicate messages, than can be expressed by the language of mere words. Music is the vehicle for giving expression to the inexpressible.

The origin of music is a much disputed point. The materialistic scientist, of course, describes music as an elaboration of human cries, or the imitation of sounds in the sphere of nature outside of man. With this we do not agree. Music was in existence when the first page of human history was written. It is inherent in everything; in the breeze that sighs, or sings, through the boughs; in the rippling of the brook, in the warbling of the birds, in the beams of light that fall athwart our path, in the waves that break on the shore, in the rush and roar of the storm, — there is music in them all.

Music is not, therefore, an invention of man. It is the expression of the harmony inherent in all nature. In the dawn of creation, when man was not yet, the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy. Laughter is music. Joy is music. There is music in a tear. The angels, those bright, pure spirits who never felt the scarifying touch of sin, whose voices, like the sound of many waters, echo, and re-echo, through the corridors of Heaven, were some of the original music makers. Certainly, the great Creator is the one who taught them how to sing. The pattern of all true music is in Heaven. He put the elements of music, and the love of music, in His creatures.

In human history music soon had a place along with the first of things. In the first book of the Bible the honor is given to one Jubal by name, of being the father of all such as handle musical instruments. The Arabs, Persians, Hindoos, Egyptians, and others, had musical systems of some sort, long before ours had its birth. Music was early cultivated by the Hebrews, God's chosen people; and was used by them as a source of pleasure, in the family, and at social gatherings, as well as in religious services. They

carried their music with them when they went down into Egypt; and that they did not forget it during their years of trial is attested by the songs of victory sung by Moses and Miriam on the occasion of their deliverance. Our modern music, as is the case with a good many of the finer things of life, we inherited from the Greeks, through the Romans.

Music, like everything else in the world, can be abased and abused; and it often is. Music, devised of God to give the best expression to the highest in nature, and man, and God, and thus become an active agency in moral and spiritual uplift, too often receives inspiration from the pit, its theme from the barn yard, and becomes procuress for the coarsest and vilest in human life.

Let every man and woman who can contribute anything at all to the cause cooperate to make of all music as nearly as possible what it should be, a pleasurable, but at the same time a cultural, aesthetic, and moral element in life. The ancient Greeks made the study of music an important part of their educational program. And in the days of their glory they had a music censor, who refused to allow the use of any music which he considered hurtful to morals, or patriotism. They proceeded on the theory, quite correct, that music helps to raise a man to the heights, or drag him into the dust. We are just beginning, rather slowly, and reluctantly, to follow in the footsteps of these people of two thousand, and more, years ago. The introduction of a reasonable amount of music into the curriculum of our schools, and this movement for better music, are steps with which we should all be in hearty accord. The idea is not to make professional musicians of every one; but to train our young folks to understand and enjoy music, and thus give them a fuller, richer life.

Luther was a real Greek when it came to an understanding, and appreciation, of music. He declared it to be one of "the fairest gifts of God." He said: "I verily think, and am not ashamed to say, that, next to divinity, no art is comparable to music." "I wish from my heart to praise and extol that beautiful and artistic gift of God, the liberal art of music; but I find that it is of such great utility, and is such a noble and majestic art, that I do not know where I shall begin or end praising it." "I recommend this art to every one, and to young people in particular, and admonish them that they let this precious, useful and gladsome gift of God be to them dear and sacred, as one by the knowledge and practice of which they may at times dispel sad

thoughts, and avoid vice and ill company; and also that they may accustom themselves to recognize God the Creator in this His creature, and to praise Him, and diligently shun those who are spoiled by unchasteness, and abuse this beautiful art.” No better words can be addressed to either music teachers, or music pupils, at this time than these words of Luther.

II.

After these thoughts on music in general, it ought to be of special interest to take a brief survey of the history of music in the Church.

Like almost every other thing in life, even the music of the home, the school, and the public hall, overlaps, and runs into, our Christian relationships, and actions. But it is with the music of the Church that we are at this time particularly concerned.

The music of the Church, the sanctuary. I love this word: sanctuary. I wish that all our people would take pains to get the full meaning of this word, and associate it with the Church, the place of worship. A sanctuary is a holy place. The Church is a sanctuary, a holy place; because God is there! and God is there to foster holy thoughts, holy living. A sanctuary is a refuge, a place of safety. The Church as a sanctuary is the place where men and women who are spiritually weary and heavy-laden come to find rest and relief; the guilty and conscience-stricken come to find pardon and peace; the place where the agitated, restless, unsatisfied come to find calmness and repose; where the cold, unresponsive ones ought to come to have the conscience quickened, the heart warmed, and the whole life revived by being brought into intimate fellowship with God.

If the Church is a place of this character, a real sanctuary, then that settles, at once, and for all time, the character of the music in use there. From the first peal of the organ in the prelude, to the last fading note of the postlude, it will be music of the sanctuary; music that will help people to find God, and to find in Him what their souls need. And the same will be true of anthem and hymn.

This does not mean that the music of the sanctuary must necessarily always be a dirge, or in the minor key. There may be, there should be, much variety. There is music for the whole range of human emotions, for every state of mind and heart, for every aesthetic and spiritual need. There is

music adapted to help melt the heart to repentance and tears; music to warm the heart and help draw it out in trust and love; there is music that helps kindle hope, and fires the soul with courage; there is music that sounds the battlecry, and inspires God's children to valiant action in every holy cause. There is no call, there is no excuse, for sameness, for monotony, in the music of the sanctuary. Its scope is as wide as the range of human experience, as wide as the range of beauty in God's world.

It is interesting to note that always, when the Church was in spiritual health, music has flourished in the sanctuary. Music, being grounded in the very nature of things, is for the whole range of life. It is very domestic. Music is never more at home than in the home. It should intersperse the play of the child. It lightens domestic toil. It helps cement every home tie. It brightens the domestic circle. Music has its place in every walk of life. It does much to brighten, to beautify, to glorify the various activities of life. But music has never been more at home, or rendered more valiant, and valuable, service than in God's house. Music has always been the handmaid of Christianity.

From the earliest days, music has been a part of man's worship on earth, as it always has been a part of the worship in Heaven. When the first great Jewish temple was built and dedicated, as we learn from first Chronicles twenty-three, four thousand specially trained musicians were engaged in the service. It was while this great choir, in unison with the equally great orchestra, sang as with one voice, that the Lord specially manifested Himself. And all the way down through the centuries music played an important part in the service of the Jewish Church.

In a very natural way music passed over from the Jewish to the Christian Church. The first preachers of the Gospel were Jews who knew the use of harp and psalm. When Greek, Roman, and other converts were received into the infant Church, they were taught to sing Psalms; but they used many of the tunes in use among their own people, as was the case at the time of the Reformation, when many of the most popular and effective melodies used were adaptations of those in use by the Meistersingers and Minnesingers of the day.

The early centuries of the Christian Church were days of trial, of persecution. Often the only place Christian people could meet for a united

service of worship was in the depths of the forest, the caves of the earth, or other secluded places. But they still sang their hymns whenever they could. One of the Roman writers of the day describes the Christians as "Those who sing hymns of praise to Christ." The Jewish and the Christian religions are the only really singing religions in the world. The reason is that they are the only ones that present anything hopeful and encouraging to mankind. They are the only religions, and especially Christianity, that puts a song in a man's heart in the dark hour of trouble; yes, even then, a song of hope and praise. It was in the upper chamber where the Lord's Supper was instituted and first celebrated, in the evening in which Jesus knew that He was to be betrayed, that He, and the disciples, sang their hymn of thanksgiving and praise, and then went forth, He to Gethsemane, and Calvary.

It was in the days after the Roman Emperor, Constantine, joined the Christian Church, when persecution had ceased, and Christianity came out into the open, when cathedrals were built, that music was especially cultivated in the Church. But, as is so often the case in periods of ease, relaxation, and prosperity, the spiritual tone of everything was soon lowered. Christianity became the fashionable thing of the rich and cultured. Much crept into the Church which was no credit to it. This spirit much affected the music of the Church.

In the latter part of the fourth century, Ambrose, bishop of Milan, was building a cathedral. Ambrose was a devout man. He was one of the best of the early hymn writers. He was desirous of having music in his new cathedral which would be thoroughly churchly. He discarded much of that which had been in use. He introduced some of the Greek symphonies, antiphonies, and popular melodies; and put the stamp of approval on the music he considered proper and helpful to the service of God's house. He also laid down explicit rules for the use of choristers. This was the beginning of Church music in its modern form, and Ambrose was its father.

Two centuries later Gregory the Great took the next decisive step in the development of Church music. He did for the close of the sixth century what Ambrose had done for the fourth. He wrote hymns. He prepared the antiphonarium still in use in the Roman Catholic Church.

During the dark ages there was another period of great decline in Church music. In a time of moral and spiritual eclipse, music is one of the first

things to show the decline. It comes as a result of existing corruption, and it advances the state of corruption. Levity and libertinism characterized the music of the day. And much of it had crept into the Church. Luther and his co-laborers wrought a reformation in the music, as well as in every other department, of the Church. And having purified its music, they used it to the best possible advantage in proclaiming the rediscovered Gospel. They wrote many fine hymns, which Luther called the new German Psalms. And Luther composed some splendid melodies still in use, and still universally admired.

The Lutheran Church is not only the mother Church of Protestantism; but the mother of Protestant Church music as well. The tunes of the Reformed Churches of France and Switzerland are, in the main, those of the Lutheran Church of Germany. And as late as 1865, the choral book of the Church of England contained only, in a supplement, a few original tunes. The greater part of the tunes was taken bodily from the old choral books of the German Lutheran Church. We American Lutherans ought at least to learn this before we turn from the tried gold of the fathers to adopt something which may be only tinsel.

III.

Music in the Church has a long history, going back to the very beginning; almost every Church today has some kind of a musical program. Let us ask ourselves the question: What is the place, and the real purpose, of music in the sanctuary?

Has music a legitimate, a divinely appointed, place in the service of God's house? Does it serve a purpose which might not otherwise be secured? To these questions some would not know what to say; for a good many, evidently, regard music simply as an embellishment of the service. Some might even be inclined to answer, no. I know of a church, built, a good many years ago, in a large city, and presented to a congregation as a memorial, on the condition that no musical instrument ever be allowed in the building. This was a continuance, in the new world, of the spirit of Cromwellian Puritanism which, in the persons of Cromwell's soldiers, destroyed nearly every organ in England. The congregation above referred

to has long since passed out of existence. Most people are inclined to have few regrets for the passing of an organization so peculiar.

Still, judging from what one occasionally sees and hears, it is a question whether most of the people outside the Church, and a good many on the inside, do not consider the music of the Church as a side issue; and not a part of the service itself. Some regard the music of the Church as a kind of sacred concert, a bait to catch those who, probably, would not otherwise come to God's House. Others seem to regard the hymns as a pleasant kind of interlude, to break the monotony of the service, to give people a chance to look around and see who are there, and the kind of clothing they are wearing. As to the choir and anthem, there is, usually, no lack of attention here. And after the service a good many people can tell more about the choir, and the soloists, than ever happened. One of the chief functions of a Church choir is to be criticized, judging from experiences. There are times, no doubt, when they deserve it. Unfortunately, as a usual thing, the critics know but little of the things they criticize. And if they do, what good is accomplished?

Let us be done with these ridiculous, inadequate, ideas about Church music. If music in the Church is simply something to cover up the poverty of the service, then the sooner we are rid of the whole business, music and service, the better. But such is not the case. Music is an integral part of the service of God's house, under ordinary circumstances. God wants His people to sing. He wants music in the Church service. God has His choirs in Heaven. Why should He not want His children here on earth to have them when they sing His praise? When the Christ was born, the first great act in the world-drama of the Gospel, God sent one of His choirs to accompany the announcement with song. Why should He not want us to announce it through hymn and anthem, as well as by the spoken word? Whenever the Gospel of the grace of God get., hold of people's hearts, it makes them sing. You know how it made Zacharias and Elizabeth, the virgin mother, Simeon and Anna sing. You know how it made Ambrose and Augustine, Gregory and Luther sing. And when Jesus Christ truly comes into your heart and mine, we are going to sing. We may not sing very much with our lips. Some of us have had little musical training. But Christ in the heart make. the heart sing. And it always finds some way of expressing itself, in word, or action.

There is an intimate relationship between the Christian religion and music. And the fact that the devil abases music to his foul ends is no argument against this. Religion is essentially a matter of the inner life. We express our beliefs in creeds, but religion is more than a creed. We give expression to our Christianity in terms of repentance, and faith, and love, and service; but Christianity is more than all this. Christianity is more than can ever be put into words; Christianity is life. It is impossible to put all the experiences, and outreachings, of life into any formulary of words. Music is the universal language, It appeals, in some of its many-sided forms of expression, to every experience of life: rejoicing or sorrowing, buoyant or depressed, fearful or full of faith and assurance of victory.

For instance take the organ, the king of musical instruments; from the first key struck in the opening prelude, it should be preparing the soul for fellowship with God. Not every one will be affected in the same way by the same offering. That depends much on the mental and emotional condition of the one who hears. The first effect should be to compose the spirit, not put it to sleep; but compose it, draw it away from the hurry, and confusion, of the world, and dispose it toward reverence, gratitude, faith, love, adoration, and service. And every onward step should be an advance along the same line, so that when the processional begins every one is ready to join in the hymn, whatever the words, with the feeling: "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord."

With the processional, the choir comes on the scene. It leads in the singing, as the minister leads in the other parts of the service. Of course, every congregation has a choir. It ought to be the very best one possible; not to out-do the neighbor congregation, but because God's service deserves the best mortals can give. It ought to be considered an honor to belong to a Church choir. And every member ought to give the best he has to this work; not that the choir may compete with the concert hall; but to sing to the glory of God.

Have we never come to the house of God in an unsatisfactory frame of mind; we felt listless, unspiritual; doubts were troubling us; burdens were bearing down on us; something was gnawing at our hearts; we scarcely knew what we needed; presently the choir arose, the very first words riveted our attention, they were just what our heart needed, and presently our soul was lifted up on the wings of faith, and God was coming back in fuller

measure into our soul? And the word was aided by the music. This is the God-designed aim of the ministry of music.

The choir members, in Old Testament times, belonged, in the wider sense, to the ranks of the ministry. That is the way they should feel now. They are singing for the Lord God; to uplift and bless human hearts. Do your work as God's ministering angels.

How about congregational singing? Christ and the disciples sang hymns. Luther started the Protestant Church out singing. Our Lutheran Church is known as a singing Church. Of all the music of the sanctuary, I would say congregational singing is the most important. In this each one personally, and all unitedly, join in the worship of God's house.

The service of God's house is not all for the purpose of getting something. This is important. There is no real service without this. We come to God's house for grace, forgiveness, comfort, guidance, strength, renewal of life. All that we get in Scripture reading, sermon, prayer, song, we call the sacramental element in the divine service; what God does for us, gives to us. Where there is real getting on the part of Christian people, there will also be giving. For what we have gotten there will be gratitude, thanksgiving, praise, adoration. This can be given in silence; but the rejoicing Christian heart will want to voice its feeling. And the hymn is the natural way of expression. Song is one of the natural ways of expressing a large part of this, the sacrificial element, in worship.

St. Paul urges that in our services we should give expression to our spiritual experiences in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; that our lips should express what the heart feels. Worship is the outpouring of the soul's Godward experiences and aspirations. When we come into God's house and hear God speaking to us, and become conscious of His gifts, new thoughts should be given birth, new emotions stirred, new resolves take form; all this, and more, which we only faintly intellectually glimpse, we put into our music. In addition to the words of our hymns, which convey definite thoughts, in the music we rise to the edge of infinity, and, for the moment, gaze into it.

In congregational singing there is an ensemble of all the music in God's house; organ, other instruments, if there be any, the choir, and all the people. This is representative of the unity of God's people; all in one place,

their voices lifted up in unison, in the same words and tune, in praise of the one holy God. Let us make much of the singing service. God has given us a mission to sing His Gospel as well as preach it.

In our congregational singing, we should be careful to use only hymns which are correct in their statements of truth; and melodies that are calculated to awaken, and sustain, pure emotions. Here is where the noblest ideas of the intellect find emotional expression; here the divinest feelings of the heart mount Heavenward on the wings of song; here the secret sorrows of the heart, and the worldless joys of the soul, find expression.

Rejoice in Jehovah, O ye righteous:
Praise is comely for the upright.
Give thanks unto Jehovah with the harp:
Sing praises unto Him with the psaltery of ten strings.
Sing unto Him a new song.

Amen.

Independence Day.

And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded:

And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.

But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.

And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries.

And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity.

Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded.

2 CHRONICLES 15:1-7.

THE FOURTH OF JULY! INDEPENDENCE DAY! One hundred and fifty-two years ago today there took place in history one of those events the like of which takes place only once in five hundred or a thousand years; the promulgation of that immortal Declaration of Independence. This

document, up to its time, was the ripest fruit of all that had yet been thought along the line of human liberty.

We talk a good deal about this Declaration. How many of you have read it within a year? Some of you, I dare say, have not read it in five, or ten, years. This declaration ought to be at least a part of the citizenship bible of every man and woman in this land. I make no apology for reading a part of it to you here and now. This is the preamble: "When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident. That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

"Prudence, indeed, will dictate, that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience has shown that mankind is more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid

world.” Here follows the recital of grievances, which we do not quote, and then the Declaration of Independence itself:

“We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these united Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved, and that, as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And, for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.”

This is the instrument which gave to our land its birth in the family of nations. There are many things in this Declaration, in connection with our country, its history, its present welfare, and its future good, that are well worth our serious, prayerful consideration.

The Birth Of A New Nation

The Declaration of Independence marked our birthday as an independent nation. This immortal document, however, which inaugurated the greatest change in the course of history since the Reformation, did not come as a bolt from the blue. All emancipation proclamations, securing to men some new measure of freedom, prosperity, and happiness, have a prolonged period of mental and spiritual gestation. The long enslaved seldom have the courage, or the wit, to at once throw off their shackles. Every new birthright of human liberty has come to the sons of men only after they have endured till patience has long ceased to be a virtue, only when they have suffered till suffering has become unendurable; an increase of liberty comes only when those denied it have come clearly to visualize it, dearly to love it, and seek it with a determination that would rather die in the attempt to gain it, than live without it.

Liberty, of body, of action, of property, has never come, to any considerable portion of the children of men, as the unasked largess of those in authority, who profit by the bloody sweat of those they held in servitude. Liberty has come only as men were first measurably emancipated in mind and spirit, and then demanded, and took, the liberty which is manhood's rightful heritage.

For generations before that fateful fourth of July, in 1776, new currents of thought had been set in motion in the European world. New visions were rising before the mental eye; new dreams were being dreamed; new aspirations were coming into being, new determinations were being formed. Under such conditions the old order could not indefinitely continue.

For many centuries, in Europe, the great majority of men had been virtual chattels; they often passed from one owner to another with the soil, at times their lives were subject to the whims or passions of their freehold masters; not only so, their masters could send these people, at their own sweet will, to some foreign land, to fight the battles of some alien prince, while their liege lord drew the pay for their service, and their blood,-as did the Hessian prince for the thirty thousand troops he hired to King George to fight our American Colonies.

This state of things could no longer indefinitely continue; but the change came rather slowly. The period of enlightenment had begun; the leavening process, however, was rather slow. Men had come back from the East with the germ of new ideas throbbing dimly and dazedly in their minds. In the course of some generations these ideas began to clarify and yield a precipitate. Presently men began to debate, rather academically at first, a good many questions pertaining to human affairs, among them the rights of man, and the divine right of kings.

Then, partly as a result of this new intellectual and spiritual ferment, and greatly accelerating it, came the Reformation. Men were, in part, emancipated religiously. The doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers, the equality of all men before God, and the accessibility of all men to God regardless of station in life, was widely preached. From this, in the course of time, it was a very natural step, though rather slowly and hesitatingly taken, to question absolutism in government, and in the authority of man over man in any condition. Out of this ferment of thought

grew the English Revolution, out of the English Revolution grew the American Revolution, out of the American Revolution grew the French. Out of all these Revolutions the question of human liberty has just gotten started on the way to profitable discussion; we hope, in the future, not by the sword, but in the forum.

We mention these things to remind you of the protracted, and devious, paths; the working together of many influences, which lead to the birth of a nation. Always the movement is forward, and upward. But the upward step comes only when men have prepared themselves for it; patiently, painstakingly, in faith, and with utmost determination.

The birth of a nation is a matter of greatest significance. How would we go about estimating the importance to the world of these United States? not only in the matter of wealth, but in the things of life, freedom, happiness, higher ideals of life. Who will question that the hand of God was in the establishment of this nation? He has a purpose we are to help solve. What we have obtained at great cost, we must preserve at any cost. What God has helped us to gain, we must help to give to the remainder of the world. No nation liveth unto itself. What we have we can keep only by sharing it with others. This is ever the law in the higher things of life; indeed, largely in all things.

Independence Of Foreign Domination

We call this Independence Day. We know that as a result of the proclamation of which this day reminds us, the American Colonies were separated from the mother country, and this new nation was given birth. This involves some questions concerning which volumes have been written, such as: the rights and prerogatives of those in authority, the right of citizens to defy the demands of the sovereign authority, the right to separate themselves from the state which gave them birth, and the like.

Government, we agree, is of God. But government is not a thing that exists in and for itself. Man is not the tool, or puppet, of the state. Man is not for the state. The state is for man. Government is of God only when it does the things for which God instituted it; when it seeks to suppress evil doers, rewards the upright, works for the good of all. When this process is reversed, when it becomes an instrument of oppression, and thwarts the

common good, then government is perverted and becomes an instrument of the devil, and should be opposed. Here the words of our text apply: "The Lord is with you, while ye be with Him; ...if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you." This is true not only of the common man, it is true of rulers as well. Men need to get it out of their heads that government, and those in whom it is personally represented, is a kind of independent god, who cannot be called to account. So far as men are concerned, there is no divine right to rule save by the consent of those who are governed. There is only one supreme authority, Almighty God; and He is the authority to whose dictates Kings, Presidents, Governors, and Mayors should submit, as well as we common folk. If they do not yield to His authority, and deal justly, they should be disobeyed and displaced. We should obey God rather than man. There comes a time when Cromwell's motto is correct: "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God."

The violation of the principles here enunciated on the part of the rulers of State, and the carrying out of them by the subjects of the State, is what led to the establishment of this nation.

For more than a hundred and fifty years before that fateful day in Philadelphia, the Colonies had been a haven of refuge for the oppressed of Europe, especially of England. They kept coming in ever increasing tides. England was in sore distress. Swarms of her soldiers, freed from service by the temporary cessation of Continental wars, knew not what to do; changes in economic conditions threw other thousands out of employment. Many of them came to these shores. Two English companies were formed. The London, and the Plymouth, to have in hand the development of this wonderland of the West. One of the express stipulations of their Charters was that the "Settlers are to enjoy all the rights and privileges possessed by citizens of England." Within a very few years these two Charters were revoked, and King James decreed that the Colonies were to be ruled as royal provinces.

It is not my purpose to mention in detail all the acts of arbitrariness which led to the final break between the mother country and her American Colonies. Every school boy should know these things. But I want to say this: The Colonies were not precipitate. They made mistakes, of course; it is human to err. But there was no wild rush to separate from the mother country. The first Continental Congress met at Philadelphia in September of

1774. In the next month this Congress sent a petition to the English King, in which he was implored “as the loving Father of your whole people” to redress their wrongs. The King refused to receive the message, or see the messengers; declared the Colonies in a state of rebellion, and called for troops to subdue them. The second Congress met in May of 1775, after the battle of Lexington. By these men King George III was acknowledged as the rightful sovereign of the American Colonies. In later years George Washington declared that to the last moment before it had to be done, the thought of separation from England was distasteful to him. These people respected authority, as all good citizens do; they loved England, it was their mother country; but they loved liberty more; for the right to be free men, and fashion their own earthly destiny, they were willing to die. Thus came the Declaration of Independence.

Our liberties cost something; heartache, and heart’s blood. Let us cherish it as it deserves to be cherished, and not be robbed of it, either by enemies abroad, or at home.

Another thing. Our fathers died to win freedom, and to bequeath it to us, their children. Let us be careful that we do not become guilty of robbing others of that for which our fathers were willing to fight. When a nation grows rich and powerful it is apt to forget, and refuse to others what its own people once demanded for themselves. I refer to our governmental relations to the Philippines, Porto Rico, Mexico, and Central American states. Our people would fight at the drop of the hat, if some other nation attempted to treat us as we have been treating some of these peoples. It is easy to talk about altruistic motives, and the greater good; but it ought to be generally known that the real motive of this benevolent intervention is, generally, to save the dollars of the Americans who have been exploiting these countries. And when you and I keep silent, we are partners in the crime, for this is supposed to be a government of the people, by the people.

Again, we once fought for liberty, we are willing to fight for it again; but this does not mean that we should cultivate a spirit of enmity and aloofness toward other nations, and have no concern for their welfare. The peoples of the nations are not yet ready for a United States of Civilized Nations; but the era of general good will, and fraternal interest is long overdue; and the Christian people of all nations have much to answer for in not using their influence in this direction as they should have done. Nothing that affects the

welfare of other nations should be foreign to us, though, of course, not in a meddlesome way. America first! Yes; but also first in service to mankind.

Independence Of Ecclesiastical Domination

The corruptions bred in the Church by the possession of temporal power, wealth, and influence; the sycophancy bred in her by close alliance with powerful political dynasties; the cruelties she often practiced when she could wield the strong arm of the state as a willing instrument; are well known to every student of history.

The records of history prove that it is not long safe to trust the religious liberties of men even to churchmen without having them protected by statute. Bigotry and selfishness will assert themselves. The liberties for which we loudly cry for ourselves, we are prone soon to forget when desired by the other man. Many of the early settlers on these shores came to escape oppression and persecution at home. It was not long till they were busy persecuting each other here. Witches were burned, Quakers were persecuted, and the adherents of one creed drove the adherents of another creed from Colony to Colony. Had not the fathers of the Declaration of Independence, and the framers of our Constitution, been wise this condition of things bade fair to be perpetuated. It was contained, not in the Charters of the London and Plymouth Companies, but in the instructions which accompanied them, that those who operated under these Charters were to see to it, first of all, "That the Church of England was established in all the Colonies."

The framers of the Declaration of Independence did not, specifically, deal with the question of the relation of Church and State, their only expressed desire was for liberty for all, in all lawful things; but when they came to frame the Constitution they did make specific declarations. The first of the ten amendments, offered in 1789, says: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

The principle of our government ever has been the separation of Church and State. This means that the State exercises no authority in matters religious save as such might be necessary to secure to the citizens thereof liberty in matters of faith, and the untrammelled exercise of the forms of

their faith, consonant with good order, and the best interests of all. On the part of the Church it means no interference, or domination, with respect to the established and orderly affairs of government. The separation of Church and State proceeds on the principle that these two institutions operate in different spheres; the State dealing with man's temporal welfare, the Church dealing with man's spiritual well-being.

We believe that it is to the best interests of both Church and State that this line of demarcation should be made, and jealously maintained; both are thus saved many temptations. But the Christian citizenship of a country where this principle obtains is not hereby absolved from responsibility for the acts of the government in a country like ours. In a monarchy, or an oligarchy, where the citizen has nothing to do but obey and keep his mouth shut, it may be so; but in a democracy with a universal franchise it is not so. With us the government is what we make it, or allow it to be by default.

We have separated Church and State, we believe providentially. We will not allow the State to dictate our faith, or the practice of those things dictated by our faith. No denomination has a right to influence legislation in its own particular interests, to the detriment of others. This is not the business of the State. The Church has no right, as an organization, to dictate to the State in its temporal policies. But there are affairs of state which have to do with righteousness between men and nations. Here it must be said that there has never been any legitimate divorce between statecraft and morals. When such conditions arise, and they do sometimes arise, then every Christian, by virtue of his allegiance to God, is obligated to oppose the immoral official, or the government that has lost its soul.

If government is of God, then it must serve God's purposes, even though it deal only with things pertaining to the body. The ideal government, and, consequently, the government official, is the one that is keenly alive to the higher values: liberty, truth, honesty, justice, honor, fair dealing, and at least decency in morals. As a consequence, whenever there is a candidate for office of whom one may be reasonably sure that he has the fear and love of God in his heart, and is actuated in all his dealings by these motives, and not primarily for party prestige or acclaim, I vote for this man, regardless of party. This I consider the truest patriotism. By such men will not only my best interests be served, but the best interests of all. I act thus as a citizen

with certain convictions, and not as a member of any particular Church. We have declared our independence of foreign domination in matters of State.

We have declared our independence of ecclesiastical rule in matters of State, and of State interference in matters of faith at home. But we have not, and we could not if we would, declare our independence of God Almighty in the matters of either State or Church. The old prophetic utterance still stands, in matters of State as well as of Church: "The Lord is with you, while ye be with Him; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you." If God is forsaken, in either Church or State, there can be no long continued peace or prosperity. "Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak; for your work shall be rewarded."

A Patriot Citizenship

The fourth of July! National Independence day. If there is a day in the year when the contemplation of things temporal should lead a man to bare and bow his head, and lift up his heart, in devout gratitude and thanksgiving, this is the day.

There was a time, within the memory of people still living, when, in parts of our country at least, this day was observed with almost religious interest and earnestness. It was a day of community gatherings, and good fellowship; but not a day of mere fun and frolic. The day was not considered complete without an address by the most capable and representative man obtainable. He spoke on the meaning of the day; what it cost us; the blessings which were ours through what it represented; the duties and responsibilities this day calls to mind.

Who thinks of anything like this today? Some of you have not read the Declaration of Independence since your school days. Many of you could not quote a sentence of it if your life depended on it. Yet, this instrument is the charter of our liberties. It embodies the best thoughts of some of the greatest patriots, and finest minds, this earth has produced. The Declaration of Independence has done more for the advancement of human liberties than any other uninspired document. It was the manifesto of political Protestantism. What Luther did, in the sphere of religion, with his ninety-five theses; Thomas Jefferson did with his Declaration of Independence in the sphere of human rights, of statecraft and citizenship. And this latter was

the natural, and inevitable, sequence of the former. The principles of the Declaration are still at work in the world; and they will be, increasingly at times, till the end of days.

But who observes the day? and how is it observed? Usually there is a grand rush just to go somewhere, and do nothing that amounts to anything. The greatest thing in evidence is an insane desire to make a noise. But who hears anything about love of country, about patriotism, about loyalty to the government our fathers established? Those in authority are not without blame in this matter. Independence Day is one of our few really worthwhile national holidays. It stands for the things which are vital in the foundation of our national life. But all the government says is: Have a holiday, do as you please. Why not make the day a real national holiday, a holy day, if you please. The President, for Thanksgiving Day, sends out a proclamation full of information, advice, and a request. Why not something of this kind for Independence Day? Why not a concerted movement, in state and nation, to make this day what it ought to be; a day of refreshing for the mind and heart of our citizens. If on our National Thanksgiving Day we are to continue to have something for which to be thankful, except bread and meat, and plethoric purses, we must preserve our distinctive American heritage, keep alive our American ideals, and encourage our American loyalties.

The Declaration of Independence, and our Constitution, should be known, and treasured, along with the Bible, by every intelligent, and interested, United States citizen. These documents do not supplant the Bible, they supplement it, so far as citizenship is concerned. Both of these documents are the ripe, legitimate, and inevitable fruit of the spirit of God's Word as to human liberty, human rights, and our consequent civic responsibilities.

All the responsibility for the proper observance of Independence Day does not rest on the shoulders of the civil authorities. The Church may well assume part of this responsibility. This is not a question of partisan politics. It is a question of citizenship, and citizenship is a part of our Christian religion. No man is a good Christian who is not a good citizen. And the best kind of citizenship is not the negative, quiescent kind. Jesus Christ was not afraid of the subject of citizenship, neither was St. Paul. Our hymnals, for Church and Sunday-school, have hymns for Independence Day. If it is worth singing about, it is worth preaching about. May the pupil ever be

spared the narrow-minded, parasitic, ward-heeler type of preacher; but no man is too big, and no pulpit is too sacred, for the promulgation of a message that will help build up a God-inspired, and God-controlled, citizenship. More and more the real seers in matters of state are coming to see that states are made strong and secure, not only by industry and thrift, not by cunningly devised schemes of intriguing politicians, not by the alliance of selfishly inclined powers; but by the exercise of the old-fashioned virtues of truthfulness, honesty, justice, and brotherly considerateness; all of which, in their best estate, are born only of the Spirit of God.

God save our native land,
And make her strong to stand
For truth and right.
Long may her banner wave,
Flag of the free and brave!
Thou who alone canst save,
Grant her Thy might.
Ever from sea to sea
May law and liberty
O'er all prevail.
Where'er the rivers flow,
Where'er the breezes blow,
Let love and justice grow
And never fail.
In living unity
May all her people be
Kept evermore.
From here on ev'ry side
May freedom's swelling tide
Roll grandly, far and wide,
To ev'ry shore.
O God! to Thee we raise
Our grateful song of praise
For this glad land.
Thou didst our fathers lead,
Thou wilt their children heed.

Supplying all their need,
From Thy full hand.

Amen.

Labor Day. A Possible American Frankenstein.

Six days shalt thou labor.

EXODUS 20:9.

My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

JOHN 5:17.

What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

MATTHEW 16:26.

A LITTLE MORE than a hundred years ago, to be exact, in 1816, the poet Shelley, his wife, Lord Byron, and a friend of the trio, were spending the summer on the shore of Lake Geneva, Switzerland.

During an unusually rainy season these literary folk amused themselves by reading, and discussing, certain weird stories much in vogue at the time; the immediate result of which, according to her own testimony, was to send Mrs. Shelley to bed each night excited and sleepless.

Finally, Lord Byron made the suggestion that each one of the four should write a story of this character, and read it for the entertainment of the party. They all agreed, and all essayed the task; only Mrs. Shelley completed it. Her story has come to be known as the Frankenstein.

This is the substance of the story. Victor Frankenstein, a Genevese by birth, was a great student. He was interested in, and studied, successively, alchemy, chemistry, and the physical sciences. He paid much attention to

the phenomena of life; and finally conceived the idea of fashioning in his workshop a human being with superhuman powers.

Out of various fragments taken from dissecting rooms, and others purloined from cemeteries, together with certain chemicals, he succeeded in fashioning a human being of heroic size, and endowing it with life. This being was a monster of strength; it was endowed with certain passions, it had a craving for companionship: but Frankenstein was not able to give his creature a soul; and when the creator saw the monster of strength he had fashioned, its soulless, sinister countenance, he fled in terror and disgust. This creature, later, sought out Frankenstein, and besought him to create a mate for him; but Frankenstein, afraid of the consequences, refused. The result was that this soulless monster turned on Frankenstein and became his nemesis; with fiendish cunning and persistence he followed his creator, killed his brother, his wife, and finally Frankenstein himself.

Mrs. Shelley never named this monster of her imagination. Although a misnomer, he has been called after his creator, Frankenstein. So it has come to pass that, for the past century, any kind of a creature, living, or otherwise, that gets beyond the control of its creator, and does injury to him, or possibly destroys, him and his, is known as a Frankenstein.

There are many Frankensteins in actual life. A man yields to, cultivates, a habit; finally it gains the mastery and destroys him. Spurred on by inordinate ambition, greed, or lust of power, a man creates a situation he is not able to control, and it destroys him. There is a Frankenstein lurking in the shadow of many a life, many a home, many a business. May I ask you to think with me this morning on what I am pleased to call — A Possible American Frankenstein.

I

Let us give a thought to the general situation. Tomorrow is Labor Day. From many sources comes the request to speak on the subject. This is not the easiest thing to do, not because there is not enough about which to speak; but because there are so many conflicting opinions. There are those who would make Labor Day, and its notice in the Church, a species of propaganda for a partisan cause. The Church of God cannot stoop to be a party to anything which stirs up class feeling, or helps array class against

class. But the Church has not only the right to speak; to speak is her imperative duty, wherever and whenever, thereby, the eternal principles of justice, of human advancement, of brotherly service, are involved, and may be furthered.

Another thing which makes this subject a difficult one on which to speak is the fact that it is a subject of heated controversy in the economic world itself. This, however, should not, in itself, seal the lips of the minister of Christ. Indeed, it may be an added reason for his speaking. The Church of God stands for no less than Jesus' ideal and purpose. He has taught us to pray: "Father — Thy Kingdom Come;" and this not only in the far distant region of our dreams; but, as far as may be, here and now on this old solid earth of ours; and not only in the secret chambers of our hearts, but in all human relations.

Today, then, I am not going to laud only the laborer, making him the world's only hero and benefactor. And I am not going to laud only the financial magnates of the earth. To do either would be unfair. This is a complex matter. It is going to take patience, wisdom, and the spirit of the Christ, to find, and walk in, the path that leads to progress with peace and good will.

The world, for a generation or two, has been passing through a period of industrial unrest and strife such as has never before been witnessed. This is natural, for the past one hundred and fifty years has witnessed an industrial development such as the most vivid imagination could have prophetically conceived only in fractional terms.

First of all, let us realize that we, especially here in the United States, are living in a new world. The old days are gone forever. And who would want them back; those primitive days when men, of necessity, lived the simple life; because even necessities were few. Those were the days when intermittent, and self-imposed, tasks, in the forests, or on the stream, supplied the primitive necessities of the individual and the family. In those days, a few simple, unwritten, but well-defined, rules respecting the distinctions between mine and thine formed the code of law.

All this has been changed. Men have multiplied many fold. The great open spaces have nearly all been occupied. Men's lives touch each other much more closely and intimately than ever before. They deal with each

other's possessions much more directly than ever before. Along with this came the wonderful industrial development of the past hundred, or more, years. During this time the world has learned the secret of the use of gas, electricity, steam and electric railways, steamships, the telegraph, the airship, and the radio; along with a world filled with ingenious and complicated machinery. No, in many things we could not go back to the old times, even if we wanted to do so.

With the increase of population, and the necessarily increased production of commodities to meet the needs of the growing multitude, people were drawn together in manufacturing centers. Cities sprang up, with narrow streets, many storied tenements, and teeming population. These things in themselves would naturally give rise to new social and industrial problems.

As time went on other factors entered to accentuate, and accelerate, the development of the industrial problem. Soon it was no longer a problem merely of human existence, but of having some of the comforts, conveniences, and needs of the larger life. After emergence from the scale of primitive living, where all were largely on the same level, the many became wage earners, a few became the directors of the wage earners, and the possessors of accumulated wealth. This alone, however, did not give birth to the ever increasing pressure of the industrial problem, and the strife it has engendered.

The strife in the industrial world has been caused, in part, by the observance of the difference in the style of living, in the possession of the comforts of life, between the worker, who feels that he is largely the producer of wealth, and the owner, who, it is claimed, gets a disproportionate share of the profit of the laborer's work. But the mere observance of this difference between the reward of the worker, and the reward of the man who employs him, is not the cause of all the unrest. There has been a great change in men's ideals of life. Education has made a wonderful advance. There is still much ignorance in evidence; but most men are educated in comparison with seventy-five or a hundred years ago. As a result, men are full of ideas, sometimes quite vague, about a larger, fuller, freer life. Some men still scarcely know what it is they want, but they are at least filled with a great, and, sometimes, a noisy discontent. With the advances made, there has been a quickened social consciousness; men are no longer willing to be social outcasts; new aspirations have been

awakened. As the first result of the operation of all these interrelated forces, there has been, and there will continue to be, demands for increased wages, shorter hours, the means to improve and enjoy the increased leisure, a higher social standing, and a larger share in the control of industry, and its profits.

Thus has arisen the industrial strife which at times, and in places, leads to serious consequences; and at all times is a serious problem to the best minds, and hearts, of the nation.

In considering such an important problem we cannot be selfish partisans. We must look at both sides of every question. We must be impartial in our judgments. In the spirit of Christian charity, we must seek the common good, the highest attainable good of all.

II

One of the Possible American Frankensteins which a good many people think they see lurking in the shadows is that of the Capitalistic system.

At nearly every labor convention, there is some kind of outcry against capitalism; and its oppression of the laborer. I am not a capitalist, and never expect to be. I have been a laborer with my hands. I am still just as much of a laborer as I ever was. And I live by a wage. I am in sympathy with the laborer. But the truth should be spoken, and justice done all the way round.

There are two representative systems of production and distribution of the necessities of life. The newer system is known by the general name of collectivism. It is the system in which all wealth employed in industry is held under a common, or public, ownership. It would be the extension of what the government is doing in the Post Office Department to all the affairs of life. However, it might be a socialistic, or communistic, arrangement apart from the government. Some plan of this nature is being loudly advocated in some other countries, and is being tried, with a vengeance, in Russia.

The other system, the world old system, of production and distribution, is by private initiative, by the use of privately owned wealth, under private control.

Not so much in this country, but also here, at times, and in places, there has been considerable outcry against the wrongs the capitalistic system is visiting on labor. But the efforts put forth to correct the wrong, in the main, has been confined to legislation, and various combinations for mutual protection. Let us not be carried off our feet. The Christian man is one who looks at both sides of a question, and desires the best interests of all concerned.

Let us look, for a moment, at the progress of the idea of private, or personal, property. Originally a man's holdings consisted of a squatter's right to a piece of land, which no one contested, for there was plenty of it. When this man cleared a field, and then another; improved, as best he could, his place of abode; by forethought gradually increased his stock of cattle; no one objected, because no one suffered any diminution thereby. In all this progress, ambition, initiative, industry, and thrift played an important part. It was not luck even in those days. Just as laziness, carelessness, and lack of thrift played its part in the perpetual poverty of the sons of need.

It is interesting to note that our word Capital is derived from *caput*, a head, and its plural, *capita*. Man's first wealth was the possession of so many head of cattle.

As time passed, some man, of more than ordinary energy and endurance, cleared more fields than he could profitably use; owned more and better cattle than his neighbors; made a greater variety of instruments of better quality for the performance of the tasks in the field and about his abode. He rented a field, an ox and a hoe, to his neighbor; who paid his rent in what he raised. This added to the alert, progressive man's store. He was able, as he had need, to dispose of his surplus to his neighbor for his labor, or for whatever this neighbor may have accumulated that he desired, and was willing to exchange. This was the first return on wealth. This was the first capitalist. No man ever questioned the right of this man to his own, or his right to do what he chose, in a righteous way, with his own.

In these days, so far removed, and so different, from man's former estate, there are many who heatedly and loudly cry out against what they call the capitalistic system in industry; that is the conduct of industry by individual initiative, and the use of individual wealth in such enterprises.

The American mind and spirit has never run largely to socialistic or communistic ideas, but we are not without our representatives of this type of thinking. The claim is made by them that our present system of industry degrades the worker, that labor is bought and sold in the market, much as cattle; the result of which is poverty and wage slavery.

The sufficient answer to such charges, it would seem, is that as wealth has increased, and industry become more completely and effectually organized, the worker's condition has steadily improved. Many laborers are now, in a small way, capitalists; with homes of their own, with money in the savings banks, with sizable insurance policies, and, sometimes, stock in the plant in which they work.

It is a truism of economics that there can be no remunerative employment without sufficient capital. Land is of little value when it is undrained swamp, or uncleared forest. Gold, silver, coal, iron ore, have only potential value when they lie unmined in the bowels of the earth. So it is with practically everything. It takes capital to make things usable and useful.

It is argued that the State, or a community, should provide the necessary capital, and thus the opportunity for the worker, with an equal, or practically equal, division of the profits. The sufficient answer to this, it seems, is the fact that the plan does not work. It never has worked. And as long as men remain as they have been, and are now, the same conclusion is that it never will work. There has never yet been found a class of men who are willing to work, to give their best, and divide equally with the drones and the shirkers. There are plenty of men willing to divide liberally with those who are really disqualified, either by nature, or by accident; but not with the fellow who is watching for his chance to put down his nickel and take up your quarter or fifty cent piece.

It is a fact of life not to be denied, and to the credit of human nature, rather than the reverse, that practically everything in human life that is worth anything, that has made a contribution to human welfare and happiness, was begun and developed by private initiative. There is no question that to governmentalize, or communalize, everything would destroy all this initiative, and reduce all human effort to a dull uniformity, deadening to heart and mind.

More might be said, perhaps should be said, of the dangers inherent in the plans advocated by the socialist, the communist, government ownership advocates and the like. The best the world has ever attained, in the way of material blessings, has come out of the struggle to excel; and from the inherent human desire to provide the best possible, not only for one's self, but for those whom men love, the members of his family.

Here there is a point which should not be overlooked by the lovers of humanity. The family is the fountain-head, and one of the stabilizers, of everything worthwhile in human life. The radical advocates of extreme socialistic theories nearly always look askance at the family. Rousseau, one of the first, and most eloquent, of the prophets of collectivism, had all five of his children put into a public institution as soon as they were born. Many of these communistic advocates want, not free love, that is not the proper name for it; but free play of passion. Soviet Russia has drawn up elaborate rules for "the common use of the woman," as they express it; and for public care of all children begotten of the common use of the woman. And when the family has disappeared, the next step, and a very short one, is the disappearance of the Church. In Russia they have already, practically, banished it by law.

No, as I see it, the Frankenstein is not in our industrial system. The dangers come from the abuses of the system. The Capitalist may be heartless; he may think only of profits, nothing of men; he may exact the last ounce of service, and withhold every possible cent of remuneration. Against this every one who carries a strain of human sympathy and fellow-feeling should lift up his voice in protest.

An equally great danger, and one which is the fruitful parent of many other evils, is this: Our prosperity, the multiplication of men of wealth, and the inevitable raising of the general standards of living, presents the incentive to the breeding of a race of materialists; men and women who are money mad, pleasure mad. More individuals, and more nations, have been led to their downfall by wealth, and ease, and pleasure, than all other causes combined. This is not a necessary concomitant of prosperity and wealth, but it is the result of the flabby moral tissue which is so apt to follow the easy way of life.

The situation in America presents another Frankenstein. Many of our papers, and public speakers, are openly boasting that we, the United States, possess the wealth of the world; nearly as much, in fact, as all the major powers of Europe combined. This could make us a blessing to the world. It has caused us to be called the Shylock of the world, and to be looked upon with jealousy and hatred.

And this situation leads to other complications. The possessor of unusual wealth, whether an individual, or a government, is going to seek profitable investment. A few years ago already, the American money powers had loaned to other lands, and invested in them, more than eleven billion dollars. This means goodbye to our policy of isolation. This means that more and more those at the head of our government will be constrained, by those in the seats of money power, the super government, to mix into other nations' affairs. Whether men like it or not, the flag follows the dollar. This means that some day, unless we are very careful, our sons, or our son's sons, will have to fight for the plutocrat's dollars.

Some will brand this as idle talk. But those who say so do not know, or want to hide, the facts of history. This is the case wherever a country's industrial system produces more wealth than can be profitably invested at home. Before the world war Germany had eight billion dollars invested in foreign countries. France had eight and a half billions invested outside of France. And England had twenty billions so invested. And plenty of the most brilliant and candid men in all these countries admit that the world war was a commercial conflict. By means of the war America gained more wealth than in a half century before. Our financiers have invested this money in the four quarters of the earth. Now the stage is set. Never will we be permitted, by those in authority, to stay out of another war of similar character.

Another thing, America is rapidly approaching the critical test of the stability of her people and her government. One of our financial experts recently predicted that the United States is in the morn of a hundred years of unparalleled prosperity. If this be so, then, as few other things, it will disclose the real fiber of our people, and the inmost texture of our government. Take down your atlas that shows you the extent of ancient Greece. Greece once ruled all the countries around the Mediterranean, and far over to, and including part of, India. She could stand battle and hardship.

One of her great generals and rulers could weep because there were no other worlds to conquer. Now Greece is a little spot on the map. What was the trouble? She could not stand prosperity. Take that same map, follow the outline of the ancient Roman Empire; extending farther to the west than the Greek, not quite so far to the east, what is now left of it, as represented in Italy, is probably a tenth rate power. What happened to the Roman Empire? It could not stand prosperity. Her wealth made her once invincibles soft and voluptuous. Her cheek grew pale, and her arm emaciated.

God has given us this fruitful earth, let us thank Him for it. Let us make the most of our opportunities. But let us not make business, or money our God. "They that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil."

III

There is a possible Frankenstein in the realm of industrialism. It has dried up the fount of human sympathy in the breasts of thousands, it has devoured its tens of thousands. Our own country has not suffered as have other countries; our own generation, not as other generations. But the potentialities are here, they need to be watched and curbed.

There is a possible Frankenstein, however, in the labor world also. Maybe, not of the same proportions; maybe, not likely to produce results as noticeable at anyone time; but capable, in the aggregate, of producing very serious results nevertheless; and all the more serious, some of them, because they are likely to be included in the list of man's blessings.

One of the serious charges against our industrial system is that it is begotten, and fostered by selfishness; that it leads men to think only of themselves, and, to grow callous to the needs of others. Study and observation has furnished little evidence that the average wage earner is any less selfish. It is a well known fact that many of the crafts limit the number of apprentices admitted at anyone time; the clear, if not avowed, purpose being to keep down the supply of workmen, and keep up the wage. This act of exclusion they are perpetrating against those of their own station in life, very likely the sons of their fellow-workmen. Is this not doing, on a smaller scale, so far as the individual is concerned, but not on such a small scale

when the matter is considered collectively, from the point of view of the whole craft, just what the industrialist is charged with doing, looking out for number one?

Another way in which it is shown that selfishness has not died out of the breasts of those who classify themselves as belonging to the field of labor is the conduct of many of the leaders of organized labor movements. These are the men who do the shouting for labor, who stir up feeling, and organize movements for the equalization of possessions. How many of these men long continue to be content with the wage of those whose cause they have espoused, and whom they lead, and, usually dominate? Not infrequently these men are soon drawing a salary that is the equivalent, and sometimes more than the equivalent, of the clear profit of many a small industrialist. Some years ago, in New York City, according to the papers, an organizer among the carpenters was drawing a salary of eighteen thousand dollars annually. And worse than this, not a few of these men, who prove to be possessed of exceptional ability, when opportunity comes, desert those whose cause they have espoused loud and long, and go into the employ, at fancy salaries, of those whose policies and practices they have denounced. We are not particularly denouncing the thing, but the inconsistency of the thing. It is but an illustration of the age-old principle that it is human nature to follow the path of self-interest. And the laboring man does it as well as the man of money.

There is another evidence that the outcry against capital, the power of accumulated wealth, does not seem to be prompted so much by the conviction that there are inevitable wrongs inherent in the system, as it is by the fact that wealth is not in the hands of those who make the outcry. It is a fact of common knowledge that a number of labor organizations have established banks, which have millions in deposits, and are run after the most approved Capitalistic fashion. Almost without fail, all that is necessary to cure the most radical anti-capitalist is to give him a chance to himself become, even in a small way, a capitalist. The Marxian principle of the dictatorship of the working man, and the laborer's assault on capital is prompted, if not theoretically, then at least, practically, not by the desire to destroy capital; but to bring about a change of possessor.

Employees are not always free from the charge of exploitation themselves. Sometimes capital and labor are spoken of as if the only reason

for their existence was either to give a profit to capital, or a wage to the laborer, or both. Neither is right. The principle is not right if both are combined. It is society which creates values. If it were not for society at large there would be no profitable use of capital, and no profitable employment of labor. Yet much of the time both capital and labor seem conjoined in a struggle to exploit society. When the capitalist becomes a profiteer, corners the market, and raises prices, he is unjustly exploiting the public. And when the laborer, by strikes, and various combinations, obtains a wage out of proportion to that of many in other walks of life, he too is exploiting the public, and indirectly himself.

Heretofore the cry has been that capital has exploited labor, that by controlling production they have been able to control the active producer, and make him a wage serf. By the nationalization, or socialization, of industry, the aim has been to get the control of production into the hands of labor. What guaranty have we, the great mass of people, who are not capitalists, and who are laborers, but not organized wage earners in the usually accepted sense, that if the laboring class gain control of production, they will not exploit us as badly as do some of the capitalists?

We belong, most of us, to the group of the world's workers. We are in sympathy with the idea of obtaining the best possible, righteous, equitable, condition for the world's workers. But before the organized and aggressive labor groups can cure some of us of our suspicions of their selfish motives, they will have to cease their agitation for class consciousness and class warfare, and their call for a dictatorship in the hands of the labor groups. In all fairness, we must say, that, in some quarters, this agitation has somewhat ceased. But it must cease altogether. Men are coming to the point where they are envisaging a new order of things; not of class and strife, but of fellow-feeling and cooperation. The great mass of us do not want a dictatorship of any kind. If there must be a dictatorship, we are not certain that a dictatorship of labor is going to be any more enlightened, or helpful, than any other dictatorship the world has ever had. We do not want to trade dictatorships, we want to be rid of all dictatorships; we want a condition where every man will be recognized as a man, his rights respected, his best interests sought.

Familiarity with labor literature shows that many of the labor leaders are embittered by a condition that can never be cured by enactment. It is

evident that even the labor leader is much exercised by the social equation. The laborer, and we do not blame him, does not want to be looked down upon. He does not want his children to be bound by the ties of caste. He is right. He is exhibiting one of the fundamental principles of manhood. It is this which has driven man upward and onward along the ever broadening path of progress down the ages. But rise in the social scale is never going to come by mere change of position. Many a capitalist has no real social position, though he is able to buy some privileges. More and more the world is coming to recognize the class of worth, rather than the class of wealth. If the laboring man wants to rise in the appreciation of those whose opinion is worth anything, like all other men, he must climb the ladder that exhibits manhood worth.

Another thing akin to this that everywhere reveals itself in the utterances of those who presume to speak for labor is the spirit of rebellion against what they call the indignity of taking orders, of being subject to authority. In doing so, they everywhere show ignorance of, and utter disregard for, the principles on which this universe is built. One might as well bay at the moon, with the hope of altering its course, as to hope to live in a world where there is no giving, and no taking of orders. The universe is subject to law. There has never been a state of society, except, perhaps, the most primitive, where man lived a wild and isolated life, where man was not subject to some kind of limitations as to the exercise of his own sweet will. As population increases, and centralizes, it will be increasingly so to the end of time. In a democracy, all men are subject to authority, and take orders, for the sake of peace and progress.

When the laboring man becomes dictator, as they claim they have the right to become, and will eventually have the power to become, to whom are they going to dictate? To the mass of mankind it would simply mean a change of masters. And the men who have come to power by revolution, as all history proves, and grasp the scepter of authority, have never proven gentle masters. In Russia the recent great upheaval was supposed to be a titanic stride toward freedom. But, with the exception of the few who have climbed to power over the bodies of their struggling fellows, the great mass of people are as truly serf as ever they were. And their only hope lies in forcibly overthrowing their new master by a new revolution.

We heartily sympathize with the great human struggle for better things. We are part of it. But we cannot rid ourselves of the conviction that much of the unrest, and bitterness, and consequent agitation which we find is the result of a rebellious feeling against the necessity which faces more than ninety-five per cent of the sons of men; namely, the necessity of exerting themselves in order to live. Those who love work, and feel themselves part of a great creative, onward going process, are comparatively few. Just last week two university students of our state, forced by financial reverses in the paternal household to help meet some of their own needs, took to burglary. The papers reported that they stated, in extenuation of their conduct, that "white hands were not made to work." Very many others, at heart, feel the same way: even if they do not say it. And a good many who work rebel at calloused hands. The same is true of many engaged in all kinds of employment. They work only because of grim necessity. They are determined to do as little as they possibly can, and get as much for it as they possibly can. This is not the kind of world in which we live. Everywhere in nature there are working forces. Men are talking of a five day, a four day, a three day, week of work; of course, with the equivalent of six days' pay. Frankly, we are afraid of a mechanized world, where all men will have to do will be to push a button a few hours of a few days in the week. If men knew how, or were inclined, to use their leisure for cultural purposes it would be different; but there is no evidence of it. Idle hands, and an idle brain, have always furnished the devil with a fine workshop.

IV

Is there a way out? We are facing difficulties. The world always has, it always will have difficulties. There is danger in an industrial system in which there is no heart. There is danger in the labor world if it is unthinking and unscrupulous. There is a reasonable way out of these difficulties; not in the sense that difficulties will vanish, we do not expect this. If we had no difficulties, we would cease to struggle, and we would cease to grow. The thing to do is to find the best possible course, and steadfastly pursue it.

One of the first things we need is to recognize the nature of the world in which we live, and the nature of the life it is given us to live. Dreaming of Utopias is not going to get us anywhere, or get us anything. In this on-going, developing world men need to make up their minds that they will

always need to be workers. Working conditions, number of hours, remuneration, and the like, will all be improved; but man will ever be a worker. He needs to adjust himself to this idea, and learn to see dignity and honor in it. God fend us from the day when there will be nothing demanding attention and exertion. Honest work honestly done, with right motives, puts us in the class with the Prince of the sons of men, who, looking up into Heaven, said: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

Another thing which must needs be corrected before man can come into his own in this world of work and struggle is the very nearly universal conception which labor leaders have of the things which can satisfy human life. Almost without exception the extreme agitators are materialists pure and simple. To them the golden age will have been ushered in when man has a decent home, only a few hours of work a day, plenty to eat and wear, and money enough to enable him to enjoy his abundant leisure. All the history of the world, all the conditions of the present, prove that a human mind and a human heart, cannot be satisfied with bread alone. It is impossible for man to find that expression of himself which his soul craves in the mere doing of things, or the enjoyment of things. The glory of life, and the highest joy of life, comes from unselfish service. And about all the average worker, who is not a soft-handed non-producing theorist, but a real worker, wants is a fair deal, a large measure of security for the life of himself and family, a reasonable share of what his skill and assiduity produces, leisure from the round of toil sufficient for the culture of mind and spirit.

The only way to obtain the best interests of the laboring man is for men, all men, to get together in the spirit of brotherhood and cooperate.

Jesus Christ gave the great ethic. He put the heart of all values not in things, but in human life. The first thing on which all men need to get together is on the appreciation of human life. And to get something of His compassion for the unfortunate and disadvantaged. And along with this, a real passion for righteousness, justice, a square deal. Once we get men with these thoughts fixed in their minds, and operative in their hearts, we have a combination that is going to bring about the best possible condition for all men; not by magic; not over night; for there will be many knotty problems arising always; but just as fast as renewed minds and hearts can bring into control the forces of nature, and of human society.

What the world needs is not so much new systems, but new men; men with renewed minds and hearts. Once men have learned aright the stewardship of life, they will soon learn the stewardship of possessions. Once men have really learned the deep significance of God's fatherhood, and the fellowship of men in Christ Jesus, then, and not till then, will we have a state of society where men will begin to work together as brothers for the common good. All the good that has come to the world in the past centuries, coming often slowly and painfully, has come by the operation of the principles of Jesus Christ on the minds and hearts of capitalist and labor alike. The best and only solvent of difficulties in this world of action is to get under the influence, and become partaker of the blessings, of the Carpenter of Nazareth; the world's great-hearted brother, and Savior. Amen.

Educational Week. The Problem Of Education.

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

PROVERBS 22:6.

Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

EPHESIANS 6:4.

THERE ARE SCARCELY ENOUGH SUNDAYS in the year to provide one for each of the special subjects clamoring for attention. We have just come to the close of a week widely heralded and widely observed — American Educational week; a subject of such far-reaching importance that no one should pass it by unimproved. It is a subject on which parents need to be informed, and have sound views. The Church should not keep silent on this subject. Our great book, the Bible, is full of this subject of child-training. The great head of the Church, Jesus Christ, was a master pedagogue; and was greatly interested in children. The great reformer, whose name our Church bears, wrote much on the subject of education, and preached a special sermon on — “The Duty of Sending Children to School.” Let us then make a study of The Problem of Education.

I

Let us consider, for a moment, the History of the Educational Movement.

There are so many things of interest and importance that press for consideration under a theme like this that the process of elimination and

selection is difficult.

The history of the educational movement is a great one. It is as old as the race. All of life is a school. But the process of education is so slow, it is disheartening, so few apply themselves. So far as the ancients were concerned, we have time but to mention the fact that the Jewish people of Old Testament times had schools for the education of their children. Josephus says: "We interest ourselves more about the education of our children than about anything else." The ancient Greeks are renowned for what they did in the way of educating their youth. And some of their ideas find favor with modern educators.

We are going to confine ourselves to the educational movement in the modern world; which began with the Reformation. It had its birth in the principles which the Reformers enunciated, and received its impetus from the expressed declarations of these men.

There were three great parallel, and interrelated, movements inaugurated by the Reformation which, even to this day, in some sense, are still in process of development: a movement in religion, a movement in education, a movement in government.

The basis of everything was the forward, liberating movement in religion. And the one thing in the religious awakening of the sixteenth century, which was followed by correlated movements in the fields of education and government, was the announcement of the long forgotten Biblical doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers; the doctrine of the essential equality of men before God; the doctrine that all men may be kings and priests unto God; the doctrine of individual responsibility before God; the doctrine that no man, and no coteries of men, can stand between any other man and his God; the doctrine of the liberty of each and every man, as an individual, to come before the throne of God, and plead his own cause.

This doctrine in its promulgation sounded the matin bell of freedom; in its development it broke the shackles of slavery in the modern world; it gave a body blow to the power of priestcraft and kingcraft. The announcement of this doctrine marked the dim dawn of the day of modern democratic government. This old doctrine, newly found and proclaimed, gave to men a new conception of the value of manhood and womanhood

unadorned, save by the inner graces of mind and heart. This is the doctrine that made imperative the education of all men, that they might know their heritage, and discharge their divinely imposed duties. This is what makes citizenship such a high and holy thing.

This subject of the history of the educational movement is a very interesting and important one, and should receive attention by every teacher and preacher. The educational movement in the United States should be carefully studied, especially the constant later trend toward the secularization of education should be noted by those responsible for the religious education of our youth. We lack the time to pursue this interesting subject further. We will add only a few statements of Luther on the subject of education. In his address to the Mayors and Aldermen of the German cities, he says: "Even if there were no soul, and men did not need schools and the languages for the sake of Christianity and the Scriptures, still, for the establishment of the best schools everywhere, both for boys and girls, this consideration is of itself sufficient, namely, that society, for the maintenance of civil order and the proper regulation of the household, needs accomplished and well trained men and women. Now such men are to come from boys, and such women from girls; hence it is necessary that boys and girls be properly taught and brought up."

In that distant day, Luther conceived the idea of, what we call, compulsory education. In the above mentioned address, he says: "I maintain that the civil authorities are under obligation to compel the people to send their children to school If the government can compel such citizens as are fit for military service to bear spear and musket, to mount ramparts, and perform other martial duties in time of war; how much more has it a right to compel the people to send their children to school."

There are movements today, in our land, in the sphere of Religious Education, such as have not been witnessed before. The Church of the Reformation needs to keep abreast of this movement. Our Church has ever stood for both religion and education. We need to see to it that we keep both.

II

Let us think together on the fundamental importance of education in our modern life. I say, with special emphasis, 'in our modern life. Education was always worthwhile, and made a big contribution to the richness of life; but it has never been so necessary as at the present time. And it is going to be increasingly necessary.

I think it is a safe proposition to say that, given the training, of heart as well as mind, the ideas, the ideals, the set purpose, with which a young person starts out in life, you can tell, barring uncontrollable contingencies, the future status, and final destiny, of that person. The same is true of families and nations. If this be true, then the thoughts which a nation has with respect to the education of its children, and the degree and character of the education those children receive, is the unfailing index of what that nation is going to be when those children are at the helm.

Train the children right, and the family will be preserved as the fountain head of all that is worthwhile among men. Train the child right, and the government will be sane, safe, progressive, and helpful. Train the child right, and the Church, the preservative and developing leaven of all human relations, will be the enlightened power it ought to be. Train the young, and industry, business, the social life, and all other activities of life, will function as they should, for the common good.

If we fail in training our children; if they fail, and many of them will fail, if we fail them, then everything, in a large measure, fails.

What is the family, what is the government, what is business, what is social life, what is the Church, but the personal and cooperative activity of men and women for the achievement of certain well defined ends? The basic element in all this is human life, the individual human life. Without this all is void and waste. A world of humanity without education, without culture, without ideas, without ideals, and a great purpose, is a mass of humanity still; but crude, undeveloped, living largely on the animal plane, and for the gratification of animal instincts. There is, therefore, no problem of human life quite so fundamental, and far-reaching, so far as the real worthwhile things of life are concerned, as the problem of education.

Again I want to call your attention to some of the utterances of Luther on this subject. Please remember that they were written practically four hundred years ago, when the western European world was just emerging

from the dark ages, and when this western world of ours had just been discovered. They reveal that Luther had the mind of a real modern, a mind that was prophetic in its estimate of values.

In his sermon on *The Duty of Sending Children to School*, Luther says: “I beg you all, in the name of God and of our neglected youth, not to think of this subject lightly, as do so many who do not see what the prince of this world intends. For the right instruction of youth is a matter in which Christ and all the world are concerned. Thereby are we all aided If we must annually expend large sums on muskets, roads, bridges, dams, and the like, in order that the city may have temporal peace and comfort, why should we not apply as much to our poor neglected youth, in order that they may have a skillful schoolmaster or two?”

Again: “It is indeed a sin and shame that we must be aroused and incited to the duty of educating our children and of considering their highest interests, whereas nature itself should move us thereto, and the example of the heathen affords us varied instruction. There is no irrational animal that does not care for and instruct its young in what they should know, except the ostrich And what would it avail if we possessed and performed all else, and became perfect saints, if we neglect that for which we chiefly live, namely, to care for the young? In my judgment there is no other outward offense that in the sight of God so heavily burdens the world, and deserves such heavy chastisement, as the neglect to educate children.”

These words of Luther, and many, many more like them, are modern to the minute. He had a keen outlook, and a far outlook. Luther espoused every man’s cause, because he sympathized with every man. Luther had a great democratic soul; he had a Christlike, because a Christ-begotten, passion for all men. I wonder what Luther would say on this subject of education if he stood amid the complications and competitions of this modern world? He could not say anything much better than what he has said, but he surely would thunder it forth with all possible emphasis.

Whether they get it in the schools, or get it by personal effort in later life, our people must be educated if they would succeed. For the sake of the safety and progress of government our people must be educated. In the days of despotic, or oligarchic, government, where the great mass of people were willing, or at least had, to follow where they were led, a few educated

people were sufficient. Such a government will be able to accomplish its purposes much more quickly, and easily, if the people are ignorant; because they are simply driven to given tasks. The same principle applies to a Church which does not attempt to enlighten and lead, but only commands and drives. In a democracy, which is such in fact, and not only in name, where the people make, and execute, the laws, there must be intelligence, or catastrophe. In a Protestant and Evangelical Church, which is a Church democracy, there must be intelligence, or a lapse into superstition and increasing hierarchical domination.

III

Should we not take a few moments to think together on the nature and purpose of education? Albeit, let us think and speak with becoming modesty, not being specialists in this line.

I am not a believer in fads and fancies, especially in elementary education. There has been too much experimentation going on in the educational world. The attempt is made to teach too many things. The result is that too many young people, especially those who stop with the grades, do not know anything in such a way that it is materially helpful to them in the struggle of life. I wonder if this does not account for the fact that, in spite of some handicaps, a large proportion of the professional and business men of the Country, even of the large cities themselves, come from the country, and small towns. They were not taught so many subjects, but they learned a few things better; they learned how to study, they learned how to use what they learned.

In another thing I confess to being old-fashioned. I do not believe in painless education; the theory that education is best acquired unconsciously, through play. This may do for infants, and those not far removed from infancy. By all means, let us make play, recreation, contribute to education; but if it is continued too long, and practiced too exclusively, too many will get the idea that life was intended only for play. There are too many people in the world now who have that kind of complex. No one wants to put a damper on the ebullient joys of childhood; but parents and teachers can never begin too soon to bring home to the child the real nature of the warp and woof of which the garment of a successful life is built, work, more

work, never ending work. And they can be taught to love it, to meet it as a great adventure, and find some of the greatest joys of life in coming out of the adventure victorious.

I do not believe in too much vocational education at too early an age. The aim, I think, should be to give to all our young people a certain fundamental education; an education which will enable them to pursue, if they so desire, further studies in any desired direction. And this instruction should be imparted in such a way that the desire will be awakened to use it during life in the pleasant pursuit of cultural values. At the same time, as a part of this elementary education, the pupil should be imbued with the truth that this education they are receiving is not intended to make them dissatisfied with any kind of vocational activity, rather to instill in them the conviction that all honest, worthwhile, work is honorable. It seems to me that in these formative years only sufficient vocational education, and training, should be given to reveal the aptitudes of the pupil to himself.

Is it not true that the main motive behind the vocational training idea is that of early and quick money making? Too many people think of education only in terms of money. Of course, education pays, financially. The only place it does not pay largely is in the various fields of educational work itself. Statistics have been gathered and collated very carefully. It can be shown conclusively what the general final gain is for each year of added educational course which the young person takes.

But is money making the great aim of education? I think not. It is to make men and women of us, who have the larger outlook on life, and the things of life. It is to make good citizens of us. And it is to give us a possession of which neither time nor misfortune can rob us; a cultured mind, able to gather and enjoy, under any circumstances, the richest treasures the best minds and hearts of the world have produced.

A few years ago an unlettered foreigner came to these shores. By application and perseverance, and the practice of an economy and self-denial so many of our people will not learn, he acquired a string of shoe-shining establishments. Happening to have to appear in court, it was revealed that his clear income was fourteen hundred dollars a month, sixteen thousand eight hundred dollars a year. We have no desire to belittle any honorable calling. We have mentioned this for purpose of comparison.

Here is a man who, in a humble calling, makes more than twice, possibly three times, as much as the average judge; five or six times as much as the average teacher; twice as much as the average governor of our states. But would anyone of these people, if it were possible, exchange places with the baron of the shine parlor? I think not. Not, necessarily, because of the lowliness of his calling; but because of his limited outlook. If this man has not improved his mind, or cultivated his spirit; but simply engrossed himself in his business, what can he get out of life save what he eats, and drinks, and wears; much as the cat that purrs at his feet? The judge, the doctor, the teacher, the business man with an education, may gradually slip down to the same condition; but most of them would not trade with this man, with his income double, or triple, above theirs, because most of their satisfaction, most of their pleasure, in life comes from within; they take pleasure in their work itself, they have an exhaustless fountain within from which they can draw, there is an invisible presence that is a constant companion, and all the treasures of thought and feeling, all the expressions of beauty in literature, and painting, and sculpture, are at their beck and call. These people live in a peopled world when there is no flesh and blood person anywhere in sight. They are their own best entertainers.

Some of us have been denied those enchanted and enchanting years at college. We lack the diplomas which some regard as a kind of talisman, the very presence of which insures distinction and success. Let us not despair. If we have been endowed with ordinary brains, and a will that is a little more than ordinary, we may still succeed. The road will be a little longer, the task a little harder, that is all. Even then there may be some compensation. What is thus gained is apt to be more appreciated. Odd moments utilized, fifteen minutes, a half hour, a day applied to useful reading and study, in the course of years, will give anyone the equivalent of the ordinary college curriculum. After all it is everlastingly true that, whether one goes to college or not, the only real education one gets he gets himself. With all man's inventions, no process has yet been invented of pouring an education into the head of one not willing to exert himself.

Education is a disciplining process; it is meant to discipline the whole life, body, mind, spirit. It is a discipline which should be life-long. Out of this disciplining process should come life's greatest treasures, and greatest joys.

There is much discussion going on concerning the subject of education, what it is, how it is best attained, and the like, which we have not the time to notice. Dr. Horne, of the School of Education, of New York University, has said some very suggestive things on the subject: Are We Educated? He gives thirty-three marks of an educated person. We cannot give them all, or give them in full; but we will give a digest of them. He defines education as the process of adjustment, inward and outward; in relation to ourselves, our fellows, nature, and God. 1. The educated person takes care of his bodily life. He cultivates good habits. He practices no hurtful habits. 2. He lives near the maximum of his efficiency. He does, without strain, all he can do. Most of us do not use more than half the energy we have, and this not always to the greatest advantage. 3. The educated person is continually doing better work through study. He does the kind of work which utilizes talent, he is interested in it, and through devotion constantly improves its quality. 4. He knows the human factors of the situations of which he is a part. He knows human nature. He is not indifferent to the interests of others. 5. He regards other persons as having the same rights as himself. He does not consider his education as conferring on himself special privileges, but rather as laying on him special obligations. 6. The educated person has constantly widening social interests. His interests pass from the home to the community, to the state, the world of humanity. 7. He keeps old friends and makes new ones; this because his contribution to human welfare is constantly increasing; and by these friendships his own life is constantly enriched. 8. The really educated person is indignant at social wrongs. Injustice is to him the cancer that is eating away the life of society. He has good will toward all sorts and conditions of men. He stands for the welfare of the larger group in the clash of human interests. He holds existing social arrangements to be improvable. 9. The educated person is a suitable life-partner for another, or is becoming fit to be such. But his loyalty extends beyond family and friends to good causes. 10. The educated person is tolerant of the opinions differing from his own. His own intellectual horizon is constantly expanding. But he is careful in expressing judgments. His own opinions are based on evidence, not on emotional attitudes. 11. The educated person loves nature. "The day's procession of the hours, the night's procession of the stars, the year's procession of the seasons, the return of vegetation in the spring, its summer bloom, its fall fruitage, its winter sleep, the infinitesimal and the infinite, the beauty of landscape, sea,

cloud, sky, clouds and mountains are not lost on the person adjusted to the beautiful.” He prefers that useful articles should also be beautiful. 12. The educated person lives a happy life. He has not missed the way. He has learned that his life and his world somehow fit each other. He is good company to himself. He is not lonely when alone. He has resources within himself. There are always interesting things to think over, to do, and enjoy. He enjoys a vacation. By his work he earns to live, by his vocation he learns to live well. His life has not become mechanized and routinized. 13. The educated person gives wisely of himself and of his means. 14. He prizes the creative more than the possessive. The measure of value is not possession. To possess and appreciate the creations of another are good as a means of growth; to create oneself is better, for thereby the world’s store of value is increased, as well as one’s individual growth secured. 15. The horizon of the educated person is continually expanding, he has not ceased to grow mentally. He is not content with what he knows, and the lapse of years still finds him eager in the pursuit of knowledge. To learn while we live is to remain young. 16. The educated person is democratic in his attitudes. The prejudices of class, nation, or race are laid aside. He feels at ease in the presence of those greater than himself. In the same way he does not embarrass those who may feel themselves beneath him. He can play with children and have a fine time, and make them have a fine time. He has social adaptability and flexibility. 17. The educated person has the courage to do right against all odds. We have not indicated all the thirty-three marks of the educated person, because we have abridged and combined, giving, often only the substance. There is much food here for serious reflection. And we might all well examine ourselves on this basis.

Dr. Horne’s final mark of the educated person prepares the way for our final thought. He says:

IV

“The educated man senses his kinship with all men and with the Reality of which they are an express part. Religion is not a meaningless word to him... In one way or another we all have religion. It is the most comprehensive of all the adjustments made by the educated soul.”

No man's education is complete which does not include education in the things of the Spirit, the education of man's spiritual and moral nature.

No doubt you all remember seeing the fanciful pictures of the imaginary Martians, the supposed inhabitants of the planet Mars. They are all head, eyes and ears; with diminutive bodies, and spindling limbs That may be not an altogether inappropriate representation of the person whose mind alone is educated The result is surely abnormal, and, in the final issue not very effective.

We frequently see pictures of Mars, the god of war; an ugly, beastly looking fellow, with a bullet like head, a neck and body like a bull. Something like that we would degenerate into if the body alone was trained. The body and the mind may both be trained to the fullest extent, trained to cooperate in wonderful fashion; still we will have only an animal, a very superior animal, but still, to all intents and purposes only an animal, with animal propensities, unless the spirit is trained to provide the motive power.

There is only one power that has proven really effective in transforming the life of man, the religion of Jesus Christ; not merely a set of abstract principles about Him, but the incorporation into the life of man's life the spirit of Jesus Himself.

In the early days of our national life, practically all our schools were established by the Church, and taught religion. As the years have passed there has been an ever increasing secularization of our educational system. No generally acceptable plan has been devised whereby instruction in things divine can be given the status of a part of our educational program. In lieu of this our Christian homes, and the Church, must exert themselves to the utmost to give this training, and do it effectually. Amen.

Armistice Day. Mars Or Jesus Christ?

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.

ISAIAH 2:3-5.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, good will toward men.

LUKE 2:13:14.

NO ONE WHO HAD COME to the age of thought, reflection, and had any part in that original Armistice Day, November 11:1918, will ever forget it. For four years the world had been in a maelstrom of strife. Suspicion and hatred had run rife. Hope for any future good for the world had died out of many breasts. Streams of blood had crimsoned the earth and the seven seas.

Millions of hearts in practically every land were torn with grief. A large part of the world had been turned into a shambles. Then came Armistice Day. Far and wide flew the message: Hostilities have ceased. It was as if a new sunrise had dawned on a world that felt itself doomed to perpetual night. In town and city, where plans could be speedily drawn, great parades, the beat of drums, the shrill cry of many whistles, added to the delirium of joy which filled every breast. Services of rejoicing were held in many places.

Today, to the day, it is ten years after. Many things have happened in these ten years. One of the most significant things that has happened in these ten years is the growth, the world-wide growth, of the determination that such an insane, suicidal thing as the world war shall never happen again. This awakening of a little world-wide common sense, this appearance of something like a moral conscience in governmental officials, as well as in the common people, is something that gives a measure of renewed faith in the final salvability of the race.

During the darkest hours of that dark conflict I was fully convinced, and often asserted, that, while men alone were responsible for that hellish outbreak, God would overrule it for good, if men would let Him do so. It was an awful price to pay. But experience keeps a dear school. However, fools will learn in no other. God is trying very hard, in these days, to make good on His general disposition, and promise, to make all things work together for good to them that love Him. And, from the evidences at hand, it is quite manifest, to those who have eyes to see, that one of the greatest things God Almighty is trying to put over into the minds and hearts of mankind in these days is the recognition of the insane devilish character of the, hitherto, generally accepted policy of settling national, and international, difficulties by the quick and ready appeal to the gage of battle.

In the dark days of the war, a good many people, in the Church, and out of it, directly, or indirectly, blamed the Church for not preventing the war. At the time, I resented the charge. Now I am not so sure that a good part of the blame does not rest on the Church. Not by incitation, but by passivity and negligence. Now the causes of the war can be very clearly traced. The pawns that were being moved, and the movers of the pawns, were operating entirely outside of the Church. The Church's guilt, in my judgment, lay in her silence. The Church herself, in the centuries past, had too often played politics and diplomacy. The Church had been too quick to take sides, and to

bless, any kind of war. There was too much of national pride, and national prejudice, in the Churches. The Church was too often, openly, or in spirit, a national institution.

Now, it seems to me, the Church of Christ has gotten something of a new vision and a new conscience. To me it seems almost a crime against the Christ we profess to serve, not to embrace the opportunity this day affords to say a word on a burning question. Now is one of the favorable times for the Church to speak out and tell where she stands on the question of peace and war. It is time to come out boldly in the language of the ancient prophet and make the challenge: Choose ye this day what god ye are going to serve. There are two gods claiming the allegiance of the song of men. One is the god of hate, of brute force, who ix filled with an insatiable lust for violence and blood. The other is Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. So let the Christian world make its choice, proclaim its choice, affirm what it is willing to do to maintain its choice. Our choice must be either Mars or Jesus Christ.

Armistice Day

Armistice Day, in a sense, is a day sacred to the men who went through the gaping inferno of 1914-18. Every soldier, of any war, who, from a sense of loyalty to country or cause, should have his full measure of respect, and reward. No one would pluck one leaf from the laurel wreath that decks his brow. No one would detract one iota from his red badge of courage. No one would question his motives, his loyalty, his patriotism. No, we would not detract one jot or tittle from the full meed of credit due the tens of thousands of young men, of all lands, who were caught in the net, and drawn into this maelstrom of fire, not knowing what it meant. This is no special discredit to them. Many thought they knew what it meant. Only the few, the comparatively few, really knew what it all meant. And they were, chiefly, the sons of Belial who had plotted and planned for this thing for years.

All honor to all the men who gave their all in this holocaust of the nations; whether they died on the field of battle, lived to be tortured with dreams of the hell through which they passed, or came through unscathed; to them we pay our respects, before them, whatever their attainments or

station, we stand in awe. They have drunk of life's bitter cup to the last bitter lees. They have faced life's dankest, darkest realities naked, unadorned. These men have lived, as it were, in another world. All honor to them. Let the flags wave. Let the drums beat. Build monuments to those who have died. Give pensions to those who live. One thing, however, some of us have fully made up our minds not to do, and some things we have fully made up our minds to do. For one thing, never are we going to allow ourselves to be caught by the jingoes into glorifying war as the apotheosis of all that is patriotic and loyal and heroic; and that men and nations reach the climax of glory in waging successful war. We have made up our minds that we are going to show that, though war may, at times, be necessary; it is a necessary evil, and is always spawned in hell.

The most glorious of all heroes are the heroes of peace, not of war. The men who most deserve the monuments, and the emoluments, though they seldom think of them, and never ask for them, are the heroes of peace; those, men and women, who, unselfishly, against the popular clamor, espouse the cause of the oppressed and downtrodden.

The Rule Of Mars, The God Of War

Everybody knows that the word Mars stands for all that is fierce, bellicose, warlike. The use of the word goes back to antiquity. The ancient Romans conceived of a god by the name of Mars. He was the god of battles. He was supposed to be the protector of their fields against hostile marauders. We have this word handed down to us, and incorporated in our daily use the name of this god was given to the third month of the year March. And with the word, the world has inherited much of the spirit of the word through all these centuries. We have lived under the impression that war, every now and then, was an inevitable thing; that it was a thing natural to human life, a kind of cleaning up process, a purgation of the races of men, a burning up of excess baggage. All this is a heritage from our heathen ancestry, of an age of barbarism. For two thousand years, and more, we have carried this thing on, and down, to the present age of our Christian era.

One of the things that makes me most ashamed is the fact that the Christian Church, in the main, has assumed much the same attitude. The Church, it seems, took it for granted that humanity could not be cured of the

scourge of war. Indeed, many a time the Church has invoked the scourge of fire and sword to achieve her own ends. And when she did not incite to war, she has been too ready to bless war; and when she did not bless war, she was often too ready to condone the conduct of those in high places who were the conscienceless red-handed instigators of it.

It may be we are too warm in our feeling, and too hasty in our judgment, on this matter. It may be a decided change in men's attitude toward war could not come ere this; man's emergence from a state of barbarism is a slow process, even when encouraged and aided by the Spirit of God. Growth in grace to fulness of stature in Christ Jesus, so far as the masses of mankind are concerned, comes very, very slowly. So far as man's attitude toward war is concerned, we believe that, in the providence of God, the fulness of time has now come, for a new and higher stand on the part of Christian people as over against war.

That we may profit by the contrast, let us try to picture to ourselves something of the nature of the rule of Mars over the world all these years. In all these centuries very few men have had any other thought but this that the only way to settle differences was by appeal to the sword. And a great many, during all these years, have glorified war as the only game really becoming a gentleman. Wars of pure conquest, and unprovoked spoliation, oft received the plaudits of a gaping world.

The most vaulting imagination with which man has ever been endowed can call up, and visualize, at one time, but a fraction of the scene the pages of history present of the carnage, heartache, devastation brought to the earth by the onward stride of this colossus, — Mars, the god of war. From the early days when tribal chieftains led their marauding, and vengeful, bands against each other with the most primitive weapons, and made up in ferocity, and refinements of cruelty, for the crudity of their instruments, down to the present, when all the forces of inventive genius and scientific creativeness men impressed into the service of warfare, of destroying each other; all down the line, I say, man has largely been a killer, and glorified in it; because he called it war. And the Church to a large degree has kept silence. Individual voices were lifted here and there. But in the main even the Church regarded war as a thing which had to be.

The strong man generally provoked the conflict. Had he not thought himself the stronger he would not have provoked it. The cause provocative may have been anyone of a wide range of things. The doughty chieftain, or the ambitious king, may have wanted a new strip of land, a drove of cattle, a bunch of slaves, or a new wife; his purse may have been lean as the result of extravagance and vanity, his neighbors plethoric because of industry and economy, and the easiest and quickest way to get what they wanted was by murder, war, if you please. The same principles have prevailed all the way down the long, bloody path, to, and including, the world war.

Already in the middle of the eighteenth century, Edmund Burke, the noted English statesman, estimated that thirty-six billion of people had fallen in battle since the beginning of history. In the one hundred and seventy-five years since then, I think we are safe in saying that another hundred million have fallen in battle. In the world war ten million men were killed on the field of battle. Another three million were reported missing, probably blown to bits by super engines of destruction. It is conservatively estimated that thirteen million civilians died as a direct result of the war, such as submarine attacks, air raids, bombardments, deportations, massacres, starvation, and war diseases. This means that twenty-six million people actually died during the war, as a direct result of the war. Besides this over six million soldiers were seriously wounded, and more than fourteen million not so seriously. Five million women were left widows. Nine million children were left fatherless.

Just as a matter of figures, and the statistical presentation of cold facts, these statements stagger the mind. Only when detailed knowledge, and a chastened imagination, play on these figures, does the human spirit begin, and, at best, can only begin, to apprehend these facts and figures. Who is going to estimate the agony of mind, of heart, as well as of body, of the thirteen million who were killed in battle? of the twenty million others wounded? Who is going to count the tears, and weigh the heartaches of the five million soldiers' widows, and the nine million fatherless children? By what kind of measure are we going to estimate the agonies of the old men and women, the husbandless wives, the little children; more than ten million of them, driven as refugees from their homes, in various parts of the world, during the war. Picture to yourselves the scene, old men and women, driven out from their homes, their only possession, the saving of a lifetime, now

doomed to destruction. See them, bearing on their backs, all that they could save from their homes, staggering along, weary, footsore, not knowing whither they were going; falling by the roadside, hundreds, hundreds of them, to perish of cold, hunger, and grief. In Armenia alone, nearly two million people were driven out into the desert, of course, nearly all of them to perish of thirst and hunger. We can sit down by the side of a relative, or friend, and we can, in some measure, compass their afflictions, and we can sympathize. But when it comes to statements such as we have made, embracing millions of human beings, both the mind and the heart cease rightly to function; we are stupefied by the immensity of the thing.

Of the material or financial cost I am going to say but little; that does not matter so much, save as we think of what it might have contributed to the cultural values, the happiness, of mankind. Professor Bogart estimates that the direct cost of the world war, throughout the main countries engaged, was two hundred eight billion dollars. We do not mention the millions, though they ran up high into the hundreds. The indirect costs of the war Professor Bogart estimates at practically three hundred thirty-eight billion dollars. This war cost twenty thousand dollars for every hour since Christ was born. It cost two hundred fifteen million dollars every day, nine million dollars every hour, during the four years it was going on. All the money raised by all the Churches of the United States for a year, for all purposes, is less than it cost to run the world war three days.

But this is not all the damage the war did. What we have mentioned was more or less tangible. There have been many other results very much in evidence, but very much less capable of being accurately tabulated. A serious injury has been done the race in a physical sense by the killing of, possibly, another five million of the world's fittest physical manhood. Standards of living in some countries have been put back a hundred years. This is bad enough, but the actual moral loss is a thousand fold worse. The world is wondering about the decided lapse in general morality. It is not to be wondered at. War, more or less, deadens the sense of morality in every one who lives through it. War makes a nation of liars and deceivers of practically every one in authority, who are responsible for its conduct. Preachers, some of them, went about lying, and knew they were lying, in their spread of propaganda. And this was just as true in America, and among the Allies, as it was in Germany, and among the Entente. It is no

wonder that we are living in a generation that, in the main, has little sense of moral values. Captain Ferdinand Tuohy, himself a member of the British Secret Service, in his "The Secret Corps," says: "All the trickery and subterfuge, and war-wisdom of the ages brought up-to-date, intensified and harnessed to every modern invention and device-such has been the latter day intelligence... .. A Machiavelli, a Talleyrand, or some other master schemer of the ages, come back to earth, would have thrilled to the amazing cunning and corruption of it all."

The lowered standard of sex relations, the shattering of ideals, the growing indifference to life values, the loss of faith in man and God on the part of tens of thousands, these are other casualties of the great war with far-reaching effects on the life of the world.

And what was it all about? What caused this world-wide holocaust? Were there some high-souled, precious principles of truth and righteousness at stake? Were the armies of the world fighting the battles of free men for the continuance of their liberties? Was it a holy crusade for the faith? Nothing of the kind, though the lying screeds of propagandists, of all the interested parties, tried to lead their dupes to believe that this was the case. As the evidence now divulged clearly shows, it was a war of national and industrial imperialism. France, England, Russia, Germany, Italy, and other lesser nations, by force and cunning, had acquired, and exercised power over, more than sixteen million square miles of already peopled territory outside their own countries in the eastern world. This was mainly in the interests of industrial and commercial imperialism. Because of the rivalry and jealousy of these nations, this necessitated extensive and costly military programs. Having big military and naval establishments, all these nations were, for years, constantly talking in terms of war. In 1910 already, Lord Fisher, First Sea Lord of the British Admiralty, said: "If I am in command when war breaks out I shall issue my orders." "The essence of war is violence. Moderation in war is imbecility. Hit first, hit hard, hit everywhere." With their provinces scattered far and wide, with their intense imperialistic and industrial rivalry, these nations found it expedient to form alliances: Germany and Austria and Italy formed the triple alliance; France and Russia and England, the Entente. Within these bodies there was constantly being woven a web of secret diplomacy, through which plans were formulated for the movements of armies and navies, and national

resources were pledged, without even the members of the various parliaments knowing what was going on. This is the way the stage was set for this conflict that engulfed, and almost destroyed, the world. In former, and less cultured days, God save the mark, wars were waged at the whim of despot sovereigns, and oligarchic parties.

One of the utterly damnable things about this whole business is that those who bring on wars, especially in these days, seldom even help fight the battles; they are the swivel chair artists, who pull the strings, and often gather in the shekels; the common man, who never wished these things, and scarcely knows what they are about, fights the battles, and dies. If, as in the days of the duel, those who provoke the conflict, went out quietly and settled their difficulties, the remainder of us might not care quite so much. But the modern man, at least a goodly portion of them have reached the stage in their development when they refuse to bleed and die for a cause they have not chosen, and in which they have at least no direct stake.

For all the centuries which have left their record on the pages of history, Mars, the god of brute force, of violence, bloodshed, and death, has been the ruler at the movement of whose scepter the nations have bowed, and marched to the shambles. Shall this state of things continue? By the eternal God, No! Mars must be dethroned. He must be put, where he belongs, in this modern world, in the dusty archives of the museum of antiquities. Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace must be enthroned in his stead.

The Prince Of Peace

Almost seven hundred and fifty years before our era, the great prophet Isaiah foresaw the day when the peoples of the earth, under the humanizing and beneficent influence of the Prince of Peace, would give up their brutal methods of conquest, and destruction, and live together in peace and harmony. There are those who think that the prophet, under the influence of some form of hypnosis, saw only an ideal Jerusalem far removed from the actual Jerusalem in which he lived, as it was, or ever would be in reality. But we cannot give up the belief that the prophet, under the influence of the Spirit of God, gives utterance to what is actually to be in the affairs of men, a time when nations shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their

spears into pruninghooks; a time when there shall be peace; not an armed truce, but a God-given peace. Perhaps not complete, but general.

We have no doubt that the prophet's words, of the Old Testament evangel, was the prelude to the angels' song: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." The angel words gave God's text from Heaven, the life of Jesus was the sermon on the text, it is for man to make the application in his life, and to the life of the world.

There is no question in the mind of any sympathetic student of the life of Jesus that He fully deserves the name — Prince of Peace. Jesus came to reveal to men that the mind and heart of God is well disposed toward men; that He loves them all, and desires their good. The mind and heart of Jesus was as the mind and heart of God. The disposition of Jesus toward men is well stated in His farewell discourse, as recorded in St. John fourteen: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

What kind of peace is it of which Jesus is the author and giver? What kind of peace is it which it is His desire to leave as a legacy to mankind? There is no question that the first great, all-important thing which Jesus had in mind, was peace of mind and heart; the peace which comes from the consciousness of sins forgiven, of standing in favor with God, of having the destiny of life settled in the light of the truth of God as seen in the face of Jesus Christ. This peace of God, which comes from God through Christ, and dwells in the heart of man, has to do, first of all, with spiritual things. It cannot come from the world, or anything the world can give. And one blessed feature of this peace is that nothing extraneous to man can rob him of it. Conflicts and suffering only make it to appear all the more precious. This peace goes with the true child of God down into the valley of the shadow of death. The substance of this peace is nothing more or less than Christ dwelling in us, and giving us not only assurance of ultimate victory; but the experience of victory already gained in the secret chambers of the life of our life.

Recognizing this; it seems to me to be of the nature of puerility to say of Jesus, in the light of His life, in the light of His teaching, that He was unconcerned about man's everyday life. Jesus was concerned about everything which affected the whole life of man. He was concerned about

poverty. He was concerned about disease and suffering. We find Jesus speaking often, as John the Baptist had spoken, as the Chasidim before him, as the writers of the Old Testament, had spoken of a Kingdom of God, as a thing to be established on the earth; a kingdom that was, and is, to have its seat in the human heart; but include, and transform, everything with which human life has to do.

Some picture Jesus as simply a kind of dreamer of other-world dreams; dreams of conditions which, by no stretch of the imagination, could be made workable in this old world. Jesus had ideals, and they were high. His ideals had to do with an ideal humanity. And just as fast as men become imbued with these ideals, they are all found to be workable.

Men have tried to use Jesus' words about rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's, as a proof of the absolute separation and dissimilarity of things secular and things spiritual. But does Jesus say, is it necessarily contained in these words, that the State and the Church are two absolutely separate and distinct institutions as to nature and purpose? Does it mean that God Almighty never had anything to do, never wants to have anything to do, with the nature of government, with what it does to and with men? Are we to believe that God is unconcerned when governments, directly, or indirectly, pauperize and keep people in ignorance so as the better to be able to keep them in subjection, and exploit them for the pleasure and profit of the despots who rule them? Are we to believe that God does not care, and would not have it different, when heartless, conscienceless tyrants lead their helpless subjects, it makes no differences, or very little, whether they are led by a halter, or by cunningly devised schemes of deception; I ask, does God not care when rulers lead their people to slaughter like cattle in the shambles? If that was the picture of God, I would never own Him as my God. But that is not the picture of Jesus Christ who uttered the words about Caesar and God. And it is not a picture of the God whom Jesus called His Father, and whom He taught us to call our Father. Jesus teaches us everywhere that God, whose heart is as the heart of Christ, loves us tenderly, sympathizes with us warmly, and is working ceaselessly and with unerring wisdom, for the good of all His children. The family, the State, the Church, are all to serve the good of humanity, each in its own sphere, and in its own way, but all under the hegemony of God's Spirit. Government, the rule in secular things, is

only one department of God's universal government. It deals with a particular sphere, and a lower sphere, of man's life; but which, nevertheless, makes its contribution to the highest. Government, as an institution, is as much of God's ordination as the family or the Church. And all three are to lead in their own way, and degree, to the same goal.

In the days of Jesus, the command to love one's neighbor was supposed to give permission to hate one's enemy, and this even by Israel. And loyalty, the love of Country, was generally so construed as to mean hostility toward all other countries, with the implied permission to attack and plunder them whenever it seemed possible to do this with hope of success. This thing was not in the heart of the God of the Old Testament dispensation, assuredly there is no hint of it in the New Testament. Jesus, in the main, confined His ministry to those of His own blood. But He showed His love to the foreigner as well. Jesus' last command was to evangelize all the nations; that is, to bind them together, not only in the hope of the Gospel, but in the spirit and life of the Gospel as well.

Now by what agency does God ordinarily carry out His work in this world? Not by angels, but through men. Go ye, was Jesus last command. Is it conceivable that Jesus wants us to bring to men only the purely spiritual benefits of the Gospel, and not the clear implications of life in the Gospel? Is it thinkable that Jesus wants His people to revel, inwardly, in the delights of the Gospel, its ideals, its kingdom principles, and then say nothing, do nothing, toward the realizations of these ideals, in so far as they may be realized, in the right way, by the right means?

Another thing is to be taken into consideration here. Government is altogether a different thing now from what it was two thousand years ago. Then almost everywhere despotism was the rule. Government nearly everywhere was represented by the iron rod of power in the hands of the one, or the few. The only thing the ordinary man could be taught to call his own was his soul; his body, often, was not his own. The only thing he could do in calling his soul his own, was to state his case, and die; if those in authority did not agree with him. Did Jesus want to leave things in this condition? Not at all. Jesus was the greatest revolutionist the world has ever seen. But He was the strangest revolutionist the world has ever seen. He discredited force as no others have ever discredited it. He believed, as no one else, before or since, has believed in the ultimate triumph of truth and

love. He gave, in His life, and in His words, the leaven, hidden in the minds and hearts of men, which, in its working, is to transform the world. It has been at work. It has already wrought wonders. Slavery, almost universal in Jesus' day, has been almost eliminated. Instead of serfs we have citizens. Instead of a government of the many by the one, we have, in our Country, and increasingly elsewhere, a government of the people, by the people, for the people.

A new forward step in the Kingdom is possible now if the professing Christians of the world do not follow their usual Fabian policy, and allow the opportunity to slip by. During the war, one of the rallying cries to keep up the morale was: This is a war to end war. There is plenty of evidence that the cry then was a smoke screen. But that cry, and other things, left a precipitate in the minds and hearts of men. God has been using it for the accomplishment of His purposes. After every war there have been some who have lifted their voice in protest. But it was soon forgotten. And the great majority of people hitherto have accepted war as an incurable ill in human life. But this time it has been different. The human spirit has revolted. May God grant that it may never settle down to its old complacency; to its old she-ass burden bearing spirit. Peoples are just beginning to glimpse the fact that, in this modern world, the sovereignty of government reposes in them. The Bourbons, the tyrants, the makers of secret treaties, the war makers, the plutocrats, are getting uneasy. The voiceless multitude has found a voice. Senator Borah, Mr. S. O. Levinson, the Messieurs John Dewey and Raymond Robins, Judge Florence Allen, Doctor Charles Clayton Morrison, Professor Shotwell, and others, have been the crusaders for a warless world, at least so far as war being a settled policy of governmental procedure is concerned. And this agitation has born fruit. Recently, when the war jingoes were about to put on an extensive and costly program of naval expansion, the government was flooded with petitions from all parts of the Country, and the program was abandoned. Some one may say: What business have the Churches, and others, who think as they do on this subject, to dictate to the government what it shall do? What right have they? Say, whose government is this? Does it belong to that bunch of office holders down in Washington, and elsewhere? Does it belong to the bureaucrats? The shipbuilders and munition makers? No! it is our government, yours and mine. Those men are down there to do our bidding. And be it said to their credit, most of them have their ear to the

ground to catch the current of public opinion. And when they know the people are awake, and determined, most of these public servants are willing to carry out the mandates of the people.

Already this rapidly growing sentiment against war as an instrument of governmental policy is bearing fruit. Last summer Aristide Briand, French Foreign Minister, invited Frank B. Kellogg, our Secretary of State, to a friendly conference, at which the former suggested a friendly treaty between France and the United States tending to outlaw war. Mr. Kellogg countered with the suggestion that other nations be invited to join in such a compact. As a result of these suggestions, and necessary later efforts, there was signed, in Paris, on the twenty-sixth of August, of this year, an instrument never exceeded in importance in the history of statesmanship. It is known as the Kellogg Multilateral Pact Renouncing War. Fifteen of the major powers of the world signed it, through their representatives.

The body of this compact consists of three articles. They should be read, pondered, and prayed over, by every citizen of every nation. They are worthy to be made the theme of every pulpit throughout the world on this Armistice Day. Let us read them:

Article I. The high contracting parties declare in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies; and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another.

Article II. The high contracting parties agree that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise among them, shall never be sought except by pacific means. Article III. The present treaty shall be ratified by the high contracting parties named in the preamble in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements, and shall take effect as between them as soon as all their several instruments of ratification shall have been deposited at...

This is the first time in the history of the world that war has been officially outlawed; the first time that the nations have put forth a real effort to dethrone Mars by statute. And the world has spoken, for since this pact was

attested by the original fifteen signatories, practically all the heads of the lesser nations of the earth have protested against their not being invited to sign the original document, and proclaim their eagerness to sign it now.

Let us not misunderstand this matter. I do not believe that this Kellogg Multilateral Treaty is the best possible one that could have been devised. In the explanatory clauses, there are too many reservations affording loopholes for evasion. But with its faults, it is the best instrument of its kind the world has ever seen. In fact, it is the only instrument of its kind the world has ever seen. It prepares the way for further, and still more effectual, steps in the same direction. If the first step is not taken the second one can never be taken.

Another thing, let no one think that this Treaty absolutely guarantees that there will never be another war. For scores of centuries the world has had laws against murder, but we still have murders. There is no question that murders are encouraged and increased in the United States by the knowledge that there is such a large chance of escaping the just penalty. He must be a dullard, indeed, however, who does not believe that murders are much less frequent by virtue of the laws we have, and the public sentiment back of them. This law against war, legalized and wholesale murder, is a new thing in the earth; and men are still largely motivated by selfishness. War may come, but if this treaty is ratified, it will come much less frequently. And it will become more infrequent in proportion as public sentiment against it increases throughout the world. And, once we get a start, the statutes against war can, and will be, improved; teeth will be put into them, until a nation will hesitate very much before calling down on its head the wrath of all other nations.

Other benefits will accrue to the citizens of the world if this Treaty becomes a fact. Armies and navies everywhere will gradually be decreased to the size of a national and international police force. Now, in our own country, we are told, nearly ninety per cent of our national revenue goes to pay the cost of past wars, keeping up the army and navy as a protection against, more generally a preparation for, future wars. Think of what could be done with these untold millions if they were used for education, and public improvements!

As you have noticed in the Third Article of the Treaty, it becomes effective only when duly ratified by the parties in the respective governments duly authorized to validate such instruments. In our country this body is our Senate. We do not know what the members of this body may be disposed to do; but the Christian citizenship of this country, and those outside the Churches with humanitarian instincts, should so deluge our national legislative body, when it next meets, with petitions urging them to ratify this Compact, that they will feel there is but one thing for them to do to carry out the will of the people, and that is to ratify it. For the Christian people not to do this, it seems to me, will be treason to the spirit of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

This is the program of Jesus Christ. Of this there can be no question. Who should take the lead in it if not His followers? Every Christian should lift up his voice for the outlawry of war, not only on economic grounds, the waste of material things which ought to be put to better uses; not only on humanitarian grounds, because of its carnage and bloodshed; but on Kingdom grounds. War is essentially a direct denial of God, His principles, His authority; the implications of His Fatherhood, and man's brotherhood. It closes the door in the face of Jesus' last injunction: Go, disciple the nations.

Prince of Peace! We salute Thee, our sovereign Lord. We have pledged ourselves to follow Thee whithersoever Thou dost lead. For two thousand years Thou hast been in travail to bring to birth, in the mind and heart, the reality of which the angels' sang: Peace on earth, good will to men. Prince of Peace, we pledge Thee anew our all in the war to end war. Amen.

Our National Thanksgiving Day.

The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

PSALM 24:1-4.

THE CIRCLING MONTHS have again brought us near to the close of the autumn season. The leaves have fallen from the trees. The harvests have been gathered. The chill of the coming winter is in the air.

At this time of the year, since the days of our forefathers, the powers that be have been calling the Christian citizen of our favored land together, that they may bend their knees, and raise their voices, in confession and thanksgiving. In thanksgiving for God's Bountiful goodness in blessing our fields, and stores, and shops, and homes. In confession that these gifts are beyond our deserts, wholly the gracious gifts of a gracious God.

Never in the history of the world have men soared to the heights attained by modern men. In no small degree, they have conquered land; and sea, and sky. Never has our own favored land been more favored, in general, than in the past few years.

At such a time, more than any other time, we need to pause. The times of plenty, of ease, and luxury, are the times that try men's souls. Such are the times when men are most likely to forget God, and what they owe to God.

This thanksgiving service to which we are called by the President, and the governor of our state, is a peculiar one. Its particular purpose is not to recount our spiritual blessings, but our material ones. But it serves a

splendid purpose in that it reminds us that these things also are gifts of God, and call for our thanksgiving.

In my sermon this morning I am disposed to deal with fundamental thoughts. And my text lends itself well to this purpose. This Psalm was composed for a great national festival day. David had won decisive victories. The boundaries of the land had been extended and established. The Ark of the Covenant was brought from its retirement to Jerusalem. A great wave of national patriotism swept over the people, a patriotism that was rooted in religion. And this Psalm was their song of praise; it was a confession, a consecration, a thanksgiving.

Let us this morning turn our attention to some thoughts suggested by Our National Thanksgiving Day.

I.

“The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.” Then we are tenants of God’s property.

Subject as it is to ridicule in some quarters, we still believe the old record: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” And God has never abdicated His ownership, or His authority.

This earth is one of the temples God built for Himself. He is dwelling in it. He is manifesting Himself, His might, His wisdom, His goodness in and through this His creation. His goodness, yes, for God did never intend to dwell here, or elsewhere, in solitary splendor; but as the Father of many children, who might find shelter in the Father’s house, sustenance in the Father’s garden, and work out their destiny under His beneficent guidance.

That this ownership and sovereignty and goodness of God in the sphere of nature may not be lost to our thinking is one of the purposes of this particular thanksgiving service. We need to keep in mind that “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.”

Not to identify God with nature; but to be reminded of God by nature, to see God in nature; to be reminded of God by every sunrise and sunset, by every field of waving grain, by every blossoming and fruit-laden tree, by all the beauties and wonders that are constantly challenging our attention, this is one of the big purposes of this particular thanksgiving service.

Thinking minds in all ages have been characterized by this that nature has constantly pointed them to God. Bacon said: "I would rather believe all the fables of the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Koran, than that this universal frame is without a mind." Augustine has written a remarkable passage showing his conception that the world is not God, but that everything tells us about God. He says: "I asked the earth, and it said, I am not He. And all that is upon it made the same confession. I asked the sun, and the depths, and the creeping things that have life, and they answered, We are not thy God; look above you. I asked the breezes, and the gales, and the whole air with its inhabitants said unto me, Anaximenes is in error, I am not God. I asked the heavens, the sun, the moon, the stars, We too, said they, are not the God whom thou seekest. I said unto all the creatures that surrounded the doors of my fleshly senses, Ye have said unto me, of my God, that ye are not He; tell me somewhat of Him. And with a great voice they exclaimed: 'He made us'."

What a difference it would make in our lives; what a difference it would make in our attitude toward all things, if at all times we were walking, consciously walking, in the presence of God. What a difference it would make in our lives if, in all things, we were conscious that we were dealing with God's workmanship. Yes, with God's workmanship from the clod under foot to the highest forms of organized life. What a difference it would make in our lives if we contemplated autumn's golden crops; and all the fruits of our labor, whatever its nature, as the gracious gifts of a loving, considerate father, who, in all His dealings, is seeking the highest development, and welfare, of all his children.

One of the great needs of our time, even among professing Christians, is a more fully developed God-consciousness; a realization of the abiding presence of God; an awakened sense of the sovereignty of God in all things; a keen sense of God's ownership, and our stewardship.

Never have men been more in danger of losing all this than in our age. We are living in an ever developing mechanical age. This means that we are withdrawing more and more from intimate contact with nature, and the forces of nature. We are apt to look at man, and his work, instead of God, and His work. In addition to this, America, at least, is living in an age of expansion such as the world never before witnessed. Unless people are watchful, all this has a tendency to make people feel proud and self-

sufficient. The danger which our country faces is the danger of becoming materialistic, of forgetting God, of worshipping our own drag and net.

It is necessary to a true thanksgiving for us to remember, not only that “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof”; but “That they that dwell therein” are His, His creatures, and fully subject to His authority. Men and women are of a higher order than other creatures of earth. We Christian men and women are God’s sons and daughters, not merely by adoption; but by a new and heavenly birth; and we cannot too highly prize this truth. But we never become of age in this sense that we outgrow His lordship.

We Christian people, though we are called upon at this time specifically to give thanks for our country, our government, our harvests, our peaceful relations to other parts of the world, and all the blessings we have for the life we are now living, will not forget that the God to whom we give thanks on Thanksgiving day is the same God we worship on Sunday; the same God who is interested in our souls, and who has prepared salvation for us in Christ Jesus. The God whom we worship today is not some mysterious force of nature itself; He is the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

II.

On this thanksgiving morning let us remember that the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein; and let us also remember that He made it to be glorified in it and through it, and by those to whom He gave it.

God is glorified in and through nature which is the inanimate creation of His hands. “The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork.” If we had eyes to see the truth, we would find that the whole universe is not only rendering obedience to God, but rendering Him reverence as well. If we had ears to hear, we would find that every audible thing was singing anthems of praise to God. How much more should this be the case with the sons of men, to whom He has given all these things to use and enjoy? We are the creatures for whom all these bounties were provided, the evidence of His fatherly care.

Are the American people truly thankful today, or self-satisfied and boastful? A prominent and very progressive religious journal of our land charges that even the President’s thanksgiving proclamation has an element

of pharisaism in it. They profess to see in it intimation of the feeling that we have been so signally blessed because we have been so wise, and good, and progressive.

Whether this is in the proclamation, or not; the truth is that where this spirit exists there can be no true thanksgiving. (True thanksgiving must have, as its necessary foundation, real gratitude, a sense of having been blessed beyond desert, a sense of obligation to the giver.

This day is not kept aright when it is kept as a day of self-congratulations, either by the nation, or by individuals. This day is not kept aright when men's thoughts run more to their gifts than they do to the Giver. This day is kept aright only when in the gift we see the Giver; and when, because of the gift, and through the gift, we glorify the Giver.

Some few will say, even in our favored land, they have little, or nothing, to call forth gratitude, or thanksgiving, so far as temporal things are concerned. It may be even so. In Jerusalem of old, when the healing spring was moved, those who were strongest, and needed the blessing least, crowded out the weakest who needed most the healing touch. Or some needy one had interested and energetic friends who rushed him into the magic wave, with the result that some one just as needy, or more needy, who was not only helpless, but friendless, was thus continually crowded out.

This is a realistic picture of much of human life. God has scattered His bounties, in our land, with a liberal, with a lavish, hand. Some have not the self-confidence, the aggressive spirit, the effrontery, to rush in and grab things away from before the face of other people. Sometimes we call these timid folk, weak brethren. At times they may be. And then, again, I sometimes wonder whether they are not just folk with a finer grain, and a nobler courtesy, than those aggressive, ruthless folk who care only for number one; and are willing to trample down any one, or anything, which stands in their way.

However this may be, there is no ground of complaint against our great Father. He has dealt more than generously with us. And whether we, individually, have gotten what, in the language of mortals, we could call our share; or whether we have not; let us look up, beyond the trampling, selfish jostling crowd, to the smiling face of our generous handed Father; and join

in the great song of praise and thanksgiving that is His due — “Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy desire with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”

III.

The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. And He committed it to us, his sons and daughters, that we might consecrate it to His service.

We speak of churches, of cathedrals, built by human hands, as sacred places. They are. We need them. But, viewed aright, there has never been built, by human hands, a cathedral so beautiful, so consecrated, so full of the voice of God, so full of things prompting to worship, as just this world in which we live; including in this, of course, that divine human life which is an integral part of the history of the race, and of the world.

“To that Cathedral, boundless as our wonder,
Whose quenchless lamps, the sun and moon supply;
Its choirs the winds and waves, its organ thunder,
Its dome the sky.
There amid solitude and shade I wander
Through the green isles, and stretched upon the sod,
Awed by the silence, reverently ponder
The ways of God.”

And in this temple everything should be, and on the part of God’s enlightened and consecrated sons and daughters, everything is, worship. It is a poor accommodation to our weakness to speak of one day, or a few isolated spots of days, as set apart for the worship of God. In the same way it is an accommodation to our lack of vision to speak of certain isolated actions as the acts of worship. If we will, every stroke of the hammer in our hands, the hum of the machine under our control, and every movement that is a component part of the complicated activities of life, may be a part of

the great chorus that all creation, animate and inanimate, is wafting up to the throne of God in praise of Him, in thanksgiving to Him.

From this it follows that everything which such children of God do is an offering laid on the Father's altar.

I wish that we could all rise to such a plane that we would stop making the distinction between a little part of the product of life's activities which we consecrate, and lay on God's altar, and the great part which we consider unconsecrated, and devoted to secular uses. With a child of God, who sees things with spirit enlightened eyes, everything is consecrated, everything is laid on God's altar.

I would like to know whether the energy a man spends in providing a home, and food and clothing, and proper training, for his own children, is not just as pleasing to God as the same amount of energy expended for some one else's children over in India or Africa. Without presumption, or egotism, what I do for my own physical, or mental, or spiritual welfare, is this not as much a service of humanity, and therefore a service to the God of humanity, as if I did this for some one in China, or Japan? When I am doing a legitimate service for my body, or my mind, in the one of which God has put my soul which was breathed out of His own life, and through the other of which this soul makes at least part of its contact with God, and shows forth its likeness to God; when I legitimately serve this body, which is itself a gift of God, am I not serving God as truly, and as directly, as when I send a contribution to famine sufferers in distant Zululand? And am I not spreading the altar cloth, and preparing the censer, through which my soul is to make its special flights of worship?

A certain type of thinker will say, this is the way to foster selfishness, and provide an excuse for neglect of service to the needy. I answer, not so. The greater the obliteration between the specifically religious, and the specifically secular; the more complete the consecration of the whole life; the more fully the spirit of the sanctuary on Sunday becomes the motive force, and the undertone, of the home, and the shop, and the factory, on Monday; the more fully, and with clearer vision, are people going to see their duty everywhere; and seeing it will be more impelled to do it.

What a different thing life is going to be to people when they come to see that the whole of life may be a service to God; when they come to see

that all products of life's activity, from the food spread on the table for their own consumption, to the money laid on the altar for the purpose of sending the Gospel to the outcasts of India, are part of a common offering consecrated to God.

And remember, oh let us remember, that without an all-the-week consecration, we cannot have a real Sunday consecration. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place?" Who is it that can sing a hymn, or offer a prayer on Sunday that God will hear? Who is it that can put an offering on the plate during the service on Sunday, at the sight of which God is going to smile with approval? He tells us Himself. "He that hath clean hands." That does not mean unsoiled hands. Some of the cleanest hands that God ever sees, and the most beautiful in His sight, are hands hard with toil, and, part of the time, covered with grime. Clean hands are the hands that have been put to useful service; the hands that have given honest service; the hands that have been instruments of loving, brotherly service; whether that service has been, for child or parent, or the stranger without the gate; they are the hands that in all things have been serving God while serving men, including self. And the pure heart is not only the heart that has been uncontaminated by gross and ugly thoughts and feelings; but the heart that has been full of love, that has fought off selfishness, that has felt its part of the universal heartache, the heart that has learned of the great secret that every newborn son of man must, with the Christ, play a sacrificial part in helping the world on its upward way.

This is a national thanksgiving day. And we cannot, without gross neglect, fail to consider some of the duties and obligations which rest upon us as a nation.

We are thanking God today, in a special way, for our country, for its broad, fertile acres; for our abundant harvests; for the general prosperity that is ours; for our government; for the institutions that are ours; for the peace that we enjoy.

It is an indisputable fact that of all the nations of the earth ours is the only one that is not torn by conflicts, or staggering under almost insupportable burdens. The wealth of the world, in a golden stream, has been flowing into our treasuries. And much of this is being sent back to

these countries in the form of loans for which a heavy toll is being exacted. Superficially we may think that this is a very fortunate circumstance for which there should be added thanksgiving. I am not so sure of this. Of one thing I am very sure. It adds very much to our obligation to the remainder of the world.

It means this, if we are going to assume, because of this favorable circumstance, that we are a superior people; if we are going to assume the attitude of a Shylock exacting the full pound of flesh; if we are going, in all things, to assume an attitude of aloofness in the family of the nations; then we are riding, swiftly, to some bitter experiences.

The world, to all practical purposes, is a thousandfold smaller place than it was even a hundred years ago. The heart-throbs of China are felt in America; and the heart-throbs of America are felt in India, in a degree undreamed of fifty years ago. And in no fanciful, poetic way; but in a very real way, we all have to stand together, or we are all going to suffer together, and fall together. And because you and I, each one of us, is an integral part of this great commonwealth, we need to think, and thus help to formulate the national mind, on the problems of international life. Am I my brother's keeper? This is a question which has its implications for me not only respecting my brother in the slums of New York, or on the plains of Wyoming; but for my white skinned brother in Europe, and my dark skinned brother in Asia, and my still darker skinned brother in Africa. And no slothful lack of thinking, and no selfish refusal to think, can ever justify the shutting of our eyes to these patent facts. It will be little that anyone of us can do. And the way will be strewn with thorns. But like the Christ, let us bear the world in our minds, and on our hearts.

The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. And this God is our rather. And He has blessed us abundantly. He has blessed us as a people. And speaking now only of temporal blessings, He has blessed us as individuals far beyond our real deserts. We come before Him today, not proudly, not boastfully; but humbly, gratefully, thankfully. In the human measure, may it be that we have come with clean hands, and a pure heart. And by divine grace may we come with cleansed hands, and a purified heart. And with unfeigned lips may we sing His praise. And resolve anew to thank Him with our whole lives, with an undivided service. Amen.

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How Can You Find Peace With God?

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)

Basic Biblical Christianity | Books to Download

- [*The Small Catechism of Martin Luther*](#)

The essentials of faith have remained the same for 2000 years. They are summarized in (1) The Ten Commandments, (2) The Lord's Prayer, and (3) The Apostles' Creed. Familiarity with each offers great protection against fads and falsehoods.

- [*The Way Made Plain by Simon Peter Long*](#)

A series of lectures by the beloved Twentieth Century American pastor on the basis of faith.

- [*Bible Teachings by Joseph Stump*](#)

A primer on the faith intended for new believers. Rich in Scripture. Christian basics explained from Scripture in clear and jargon-free language. Many excellent Bible studies can be made from this book.

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Essential Theology | Books to Download

- [*The Augsburg Confession: An Introduction To Its Study And An Exposition Of Its Contents by Matthias Loy*](#)

“Sincere believers of the truth revealed in Christ for man's salvation have no reason to be ashamed of Luther, whom God sent to bring again to His people the precious truth in Jesus and whose heroic contention for the faith once delivered to the saints led to the establishment of the Church of the Augsburg Confession, now generally called the Evangelical Lutheran Church.”

- [*The Doctrine of Justification by Matthias Loy*](#)

“Human reason and inclination are always in their natural state averse to the doctrine of Justification by faith. Hence it is no wonder that earth and hell combine in persistent efforts to banish it from the Church and from the world.”

- [*The Confessional Principle* by Theodore Schmauk](#)

Theodore Schmauk’s exploration and defense of the Christian faith consists of five parts: Historical Introduction; Part 1: Are Confessions Necessary?; Part 2: Confessions in the Church; Part 3: Lutheran Confessions; and Part 4: The Church in America.

- [*Summary of the Christian Faith* by Henry Eyster Jacobs](#)

A Summary of the Christian Faith has been appreciated by Christians since its original publication for its easy to use question and answer format, its clear organization, and its coverage of all the essentials of the Christian faith. Two essays on election and predestination are included, including Luther’s “Speculations Concerning Predestination”.

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Devotional Classics | Books to Download

- [*Sermons on the Gospels* by Matthias Loy](#) and [*Sermons on the Epistles* by Matthias Loy](#)

“When you feel your burden of sin weighing heavily upon you, only go to Him... Only those who will not acknowledge their sin and feel no need of a Savior — only these are rejected. And these are not rejected because the Lord has no pity on them and no desire to deliver them from their wretchedness, but only because they will not come to

Him that they might have life. They reject Him, and therefore stand rejected. But those who come to Him, poor and needy and helpless, but trusting in His mercy, He will receive, to comfort and to save.”

- *The Great Gospel* by Simon Peter Long and *The Eternal Epistle* by Simon Peter Long

“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.”

- *True Christianity* by John Arndt
- *The Sermons of Theophilus Stork: A Devotional Treasure*

“There are many of us who believe; we are convinced; but our souls do not take fire at contact with the truth. Happy he who not only believes, but believes with fire... This energy of belief, this ardor of conviction, made the commonplaces of the Gospel, the old, old story, seem in his [Stork’s] utterance something fresh and irresistibly attractive. Men listened to old truths from his lips as though they were a new revelation. They were new, for they came out of a heart that new coined them and stamped its own impress of vitality upon them as they passed through its experience...” – From the Introduction

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