



PREACHING  
IN THE  
TWENTIETH CENTURY  
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TO FAITHFUL PREACHERS OF THE  
GOSPEL EVERYWHERE THIS VOLUME  
IS DEDICATED BY  
THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE  
OF  
THE OLD PATHS BOOK CLUB

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## PREFACE

This book, "Preaching in the Twentieth Century; Or The Old Faith Re-Stated," is a composite creation by four reputable and able men, leaders in thought in the Churches of Christ, for the express purpose of launching the Old Paths Book Club within the ranks of the Churches of Christ in the United States. The intention is to present herein and hereby a re-study of the ancient faith in the light of a modern setting. Much water has flowed under the bridge since the beginning of the Restoration Movement in the first part of the nineteenth century. A study of religious society then and now will reveal a great deal of difference. In fact, the writing of these men in this volume will show a difference, of which, sometimes, we are not too conscious, because we do not conjure the past when we make our way to human society now. Of course things are forever in flux; and patterns of thinking, while they have a tendency to run in circles, redressing themselves in new verbiage from time to time, vary the scene enough to make a careful survey proper and necessary. The writers in the meantime seek to emphasize the eternal principles of the religion of Christ despite the changing externalities of a traditional ritualism. Paul had to be conscious of the religious scene about him. When he preached in a Jewish synagogue he made an approach to the subject of Christ through Jewish eyes and from the Old Testament prophets. When he preached to the Greek philosophers on Mar's Hill he made an approach through Greek culture and philosophy. When in the midst of a distinctly Roman culture, then he became a Roman. He became all things to all men. He was acutely aware of his surroundings, and the patterns of thought of his day, in all the sections where he preached. One today must be equally awake and preach to the subject in hand. If he is living in a dream world, he is hardly qualified to go unto this generation, regardless of the ideal which he may have, and also regardless of how well he may know the ancient faith. The purpose of this volume is to point out the contrast in present religious society and the ancient faith, so that an intelligent approach may be made to the people of this generation. Nor is it pre-supposed that this distinction is not in hand; but the attempt is to emphasize it to such an extent that all who read this volume may be more acutely

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aware of it, and so have their powers for good enhanced. The power of projecting ourselves over into other realms of thought, to catch the other person's angle of vision, and to begin from there to bring his thinking to the way of our own is the power of gospel salesmanship.

An eternal awareness of a world in flux, and an eternal vigilance because of the worth of the souls of men are points which the present volume intends to stress.

Every generation must study anew its motivations as well as the infinite accretions of tradition, so as to make a proper distinction between what is merely traditional and what is divine. It must do this to avoid the loss of its very soul in bowing to tradition. This generation, too, can make void the commandments of God by tradition. Nor is it enough to think that the truth once stated, or disengaged from the traditions of men, in another and previous generation—coming through the patterns of thought of that day—will leave it forever free. The battle for truth as opposed to error must be fought in every age. And it can be fought in books the same as in periodicals and in the pulpit. This, then, is ample apology for presenting this volume to the public.

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## INTRODUCTION

Preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the world's greatest work. And it is an arduous undertaking; one fraught with fearful responsibility; one loaded with infinite possibilities; one of conflicts of interests; one with results affecting ever-increasing realms in mankind — in a word, a power in the hearts of men and of nations determining not alone their spiritual prosperity, but also their material well being. These, in the final analysis, are indissolubly connected, enmeshed, so to say. So the preaching of the Gospel is not an isolated thing, with which the world can dispense. This inter-relation of material well being and of spiritual prosperity is acknowledged in this quotation from Alexis de Tocqueville, brilliant French writer:

"I sought for the greatness and genius of Armeria in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers; it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her fertile fields and her boundless forests; it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her rich mines and her vast world commerce; it was not there.

"I sought for the greatness and genius of Armeria in her free public schools and her institutions of learning; it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her matchless Constitution and her democratic Congress; it was not there.

"Not until I went into churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I understand the greatness and genius of America. America is great because America is good. If America ever ceases to be good America will cease to be great."

There is a close relation between religious life and the determining policies of this Nation. As an example of this, let us remember that there have been more occupants of the White House from the parsonage and the manse than from any other type of home. Twelve Presidents and First Ladies have come from this source.

It can well be remembered also that in the Hall of Fame, representing all branches of achievement, the greatest percentage—greater than that of doctors, bankers, merchant princes—has also come from the parsonage and the manse. Whence this striking



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relationship between great achievement and religious background? Can religion be divorced from life, from achievement?

What life looming out of the Reformation is comparable to that of the humble monk of Wittenburg? The bright light of posterity has been concentrated upon that life more than upon any of the reigning princes of that (lay, more even than upon the Emperor Charles V. Von Miltitz, Dr. Eck, and others, are brighter names in history because they came into conflict with the monk who walked the halls of Erfurt.

Names to be conjured with, names that have affected currents in human history and human thought, have mostly been those, in some way, associated with religious endeavor. The humble carpenter of Nazareth, who did not have a pulpit fashioned for his occupancy, sat on a mountainside in Judaea, and set forth such thoughts that have been more powerful than all the legions that have ever marched; all the armament factories that have ground out human arms for destruction. What he said has determined the issues in the great crises since then more than the military genius of any thundering son of Thor, the God of war. Indeed, the greatest values are those of the heart. Since the preacher goes to the heart. His interest is not in gadgets and things.

The little Cilician Jew who came down from the Aleian plain, from the side of the river Cyndus, who stood before governors and kings to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, did more to change the current of human history than did the son of Phillip, who marched, with his ten thousand Greeks throughout the world. With no fanfare, but hounded from city to city, and with only some humble vagabonds whom he called his coadjutors, he went from heathen temple to Jewish synagogue, to the Areopagus, with a message which he thrust with gleaming confidence into the hearts of men and women everywhere. Not a single great temple, abby or fane had been reared in stately elegance, with pinnacles reaching in Gothic beauty toward the sky. But, strangely enough, those heathen temples which he knew have been destroyed; and abbys, cathedrals and world-renowned fanes have been reared in the path he has trod. Not that he called for them, or indeed authorized them: They sprang from the earth as a voluntary tribute to the genius of the religion which he preached. This is indeed no apology for such creations, with their wrong conceptions in theology; it is rather, in historic perspective, a simple mention of the influence of

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his consecrated life. He is not responsible for any misdirection; nor for any corruptions in religion.

But enough of this emphasis on the influence of religious life, and especially in preaching. The doctrinal aspect of this matter will be touched upon later on in this Introduction.

Preaching in the twentieth century—is it any different from preaching in any other century? The Gospel is certainly not different. The needs of men and women are not different. This great scientific age has produced a mechanistic civilization; we live in a time when science has unlocked the secret springs of the electronic drawers of might, brought within our grasp atomic energy, explored the mysteries of ether, and made a servant of man the recondite energies of the world. But has all this changed man? Not one whit. His law of ingress into this world, while attended with more skill, is precisely the same that it has always been. His relationship to God, to time and to his fellows; his relationship to the moral imperatives of the soul; his reactions to right and wrong—these are the same since the first people lived upon the earth. There is no need, then, for a new Gospel. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, once fully developed in the providence of God, will suffice for all generations. Why, then, talk about preaching in the twentieth century?

One must know his generation, as well as the Gospel which he is to preach. That Gospel has a running quality, consonant with the interests of all men, in all ages. Its general character is similar to that character of style, mentioned by Dr. Johnson, in his criticisms on Shakespeare. He said: "If there be, what I believe there is, in every nation, a style which never becomes obsolete, a certain mode of phraseology so consonant and congenial to the analogy and principles of its respective language as to remain settled and unaltered; this style is probably to be sought in the common intercourse of life, among those who speak only to be understood, without ambition of elegance. The polite are always catching modish innovations, and the learned depart from established forms of speech, in hope of finding or making better; those who wish for distinction forsake the vulgar, when the vulgar is right; but there is a conversation above grossness and below refinement, where propriety resides." Now the Everlasting Gospel is this thing of even keel, forever in the needs of men, and the variants are the cultures of an age, the theological twists; the verbiage of

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the schools; the sophistications of an era. But "the able minister of Jesus Christ" must know the variants also. If Paul had preached a set sermon, formulated out of a Jewish background of a hundred years before, alike in heathen temple and among the philosophers on Mar's Hill, his achievements would have been but slight.

How can one preach to a generation which he does not understand? When Jeremiah was sent unto his people he became acutely aware of their sins. He did not talk about something remote. To the King Jehoiakin he said dire things, to the princes and rulers he talked plainly. He knew not only the issues and the principles in his nation; he was acquainted with the chief offenders against those principles. Had he walked into his work with a Mosaic view, relieved by a background of Egyptian life, he should have been utterly ridiculous. He lived under the very dispensation which Moses inaugurated, but under vastly different surroundings. When Ezekiel "sat where the people sat," in a distant land, he came to know their thoughts. Now he belonged to the same people which Moses led from Egyptian bondage, and he had the same religion, but he faced the conditions of a captive people. His message to them was always in harmony with that condition of captivity.

We preach the same Gospel in this, the twentieth century, that Paul preached, that Peter preached in the first century. It is an unvarying Gospel. Men and angels are condemned who would preach any other. (See Galatians 1 :8, 9.) But are conditions the same? They are vastly different. When Rip Van Winkle emerged from his twenty years' sleep, he saw a new world. If Paul should come onto this stage now, would he speak as to the philosophers on Mar's Hill, as to the Jews in a synagogue? He became all things to all men. Now he would see before him a vast secularism rising like the ghost in the Thousand and One Nights from the jug that was uncorked after it had been drawn from the sea. It is a colossal figure. If one cannot see it, though of ghostly outline, limned against the sky, he has closed his eyes. Its cry is "One world at a time." It sees only this. It has had infused into its composition the theory of evolution, higher criticism and modernism, the mechanical sciences, a vitiated and insipid sectarianism, a robust materialism. It is no longer the worship of Diana of the Ephesians which one must meet: it is no longer the morals of the

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temple of Aphrodite which one must combat; it is a disbelieving secularism. Upon what does one look when he goes with the Gospel today? Certainly not upon heathen fanes. Their wreckage has been laved by the receding waves of time upon a nearly forgotten shore. One does not go with an accepted Gospel, in spite of the fact that we live in Christendom. He goes where the Gospel has been nominally accepted, but its power has been destroyed, and even denied, while its professed devotees with maudlin sentiment speak blithely of its beauty.

The art of preaching, surveyed on the following pages by an able student, Brother J. P. Sanders, whose scholastic attainments are many, places before brethren everywhere this book may reach such information as to make the average person when he listens to a sermon a better listener, because he becomes aware of some of the many elements that enter into the preparation and delivery of a sermon. As public speaking is itself a great art, anyone who listens to a good speech is bound to ponder not alone the points of merit advanced, but he will end his hearing with the scintillations of the personality through which it came vibrating within him. That is inevitable. A theme may be an everlasting theme, but it comes to us through human beings. "We have this treasure (of the Gospel) in earthen vessels," affirms the Apostle to the Gentiles. While preachers may, in some measure, profit the most from the reflections offered in this section of the book, those who do not attempt this great art will find herein a stimulation of their interest to the extent that they will be more appreciative of the labors of a preacher of the Word. The most men and women, on a superficial view, are apt to overlook the great difficulties in the way of a person of another profession, or the calling of the preacher of the Gospel. They are more apt to think of the most pleasing aspects of a line different from their own. It will not hurt for folk generally who may read this book not alone to see how this sort of a work is done, but to mine to appreciate the fact indeed, that the shaping of the whole life and character must enter into such a work—not the mere art of sermonizing for a few minutes on a Sunday morning and on a Sunday evening. The thought is placed before the reader here that the whole of a man's waking thoughts must shape themselves from day to day toward the task upon which he is to concentrate his energies, his character and his life when he comes before a waiting people.

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It most evidently is not the intention of the author of this section of this volume to cause the casual reader to think that all the preacher of the Word has to do is to preach! Far from it! A thousand and one things press in upon him from the busy and care-worn world through the week. The marvel is that he has any time left to devote to so great an art as he is called upon ably to support when he goes before dying men and women. A preacher is one of the greatest specialists of the world. He deals with those intangible matters of the soul as it grapples with the problem of living in a sinful world. These problems come to him from all directions, and at the most unexpected moments. Perhaps no man in the community is so subject to surprises in human conduct as is the preacher of the Gospel. He is made the confidant of the most intimate and perplexing problems of life from all ages, from the cradle to the grave. His art is the alchemy of souls.

As a preacher grows in his emotional life to appreciate the struggles of men and women with sin' and as he mellows under the bludgeons of life, he comes to the pulpit with a fuller and more understanding heart than is possible at the beginning, however versed he may be in the art of preaching. And that leads on to another reflection: Some of the greatest preachers have studied less the art of preaching, but, being filled in their souls with the thought of the work to be done, have been urged on by spiritual interests, in the most instances employing some of the most vital things in the art without being aware of them at all.

Any preacher who is to do a truly wonderful work must have the capacity to reach the remote, and to familiarize the wonderful. His preaching must agree to life; A must be level with life. It really follows that he must know life, as well as the Gospel. When he speaks to the hearts of men and women they must feel that such thoughts as he is uttering have passed through their minds, and such solutions as he proposes through the Gospel are in harmony with their deepest needs. Anyone preaching in this attitude is almost altogether unconscious that he is employing any art at all, but is simply talking straight into the souls of men and women with the vitalizing message which they need. Such powers as he may have in the art of preaching must work under such control and in so subordinate a place as to leave the listener unaware of it also, and enthralled simply with the message itself. When one preaches on this plane, however great his art may be, his audience

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will be moved from point to point at his behest without thinking of the gifts of the speaker. The moment the audience becomes supremely aware of his art, he has lost his whole purpose in their listening. It must be with every preacher as it was with Paul, that he is determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

It was observed of the ancient schools of declamation that the more one frequented them the more he was disqualified for the world, for he found nothing there with which he should ever meet in any other place. Now manifestly the preparation of a preacher for his work must not be of this sort. And again it can be observed that so soon as he may acquire the techniques of the art, the place to improve upon talents, the place to sharpen his tools, so to speak, will be in the busy marts of men. He must come from the place where the people sit, as did Ezekiel, in order to be effective in his preaching. He must preach to the occasion. A set of sermons from some other source, however brilliant, will not serve to the best advantage. Anyway, any materials that may be wrought into the character of the preacher must become such a part of him that he will be unconscious of their origin or source. And until a preacher comes to possess His own soul, to detach whatever he has learned from some other powerful personality, he works under such a shadow and such a handicap that he is not truly ready for his work.

When one goes out to preach, whatever his equipment, he needs to be endowed with a vigilance of observation and a sense of distinction which do not come from books; and then he needs to have the native judgment to apply the ancient Gospel, with all the advantages of his art, in the most effective way. He who knows only books, without this instinctive insight, plays around with tools whose usage he cannot appreciate; and he who lacks these tools, however instinctive his insight and gifted his appreciation, lacks something, especially with the cultured, of being able to reach to the heights.

A workman that needeth not to be ashamed in the preaching of the word has the skill without attracting attention to himself except in the most incidental way. Dr. Johnson said something in the realm of criticism of literature once which I wish to pass over to the matter of preaching. While what he said was with regard to another field of human endeavor, it will be quite appropriate here. " expresses his wonder that Shakespeare's extravagances

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are endured by a nation which has seen the tragedy of *Cato*. Let him be answered that *Addison* speaks the language of poets, and *Shakespeare*, of men. We find in *Cato* innumerable beauties which enamor us of its author, but we see nothing that acquaints us with human sentiments or human actions; we place it with the fairest and the noblest progeny which judgment propagates by conjunction with learning, but *Othello* is the vigorous and vivacious offspring of observation impregnated by genius. *Cato* affords a splendid exhibition of artificial and fictitious manners, and delivers just and noble sentiments, in diction easy, elevated and harmonious, but its hopes and fears communicate no vibrations to the heart; the composition refers us only to the writer; we pronounce the name of *Cato*, but we think of *Addison*." Now when in the realm of preaching one refers us to Christ, but we think of the preacher, in all the elevated dignity of a sonorous speech, a studied pathos, a perfect creation of homiletical elegance, then a beautiful art is turned in upon itself. Such an art should not be placed in the hand of an ego-centric person whose end is to build his own prestige.

If poets are born, not made, it is also true to some extent that preachers are born, not made. Some men with great natural talents, whose literary attainments have been very limited, have more powerfully affected their fellows than have some of the more cultured. The case of "Raccoon" John Smith is one in point. It is not the intention of the author of the first section of this book, therefore, to throw the slightest discouragement in the path of those good and faithful men whose academic training has been somewhat limited. Rather, may it here be suggested that such men as possess a natural talent, and the conviction which motivated Paul when he said, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel!" instead of finding anything herein said in any sense discouraging to their efforts may find an opportunity to think upon those things which they have so long unconsciously employed, as they preached. And it may even be possible that they will find some points here suggested that will give them greater courage to go on with their work, the while, as men of ready wit and talent, they improve themselves thereby. It is really a great service to place these things in the hands of such men. They usually possess that originality which enables them to appropriate any such suggestions immediately to their own use. In this case the thought of the

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schools is brought to them, if for any reason they cannot go to the schools.

In the second section of the book we have the writing of a man who has specialized in the literature of the Restoration Movement. Brother Norred has also written a book upon this general subject in the past. In dealing with the preaching among the pioneers, he has given us a background for their work. He has not so much dealt with the manner of their preaching as with the substance of their thoughts, which was what was originally intended in outlining this volume. He has not in all instances been so interested in *interpreting* the substance of their preaching as inserting extensive samples of their material, so that we may judge for ourselves. Had he seen fit to deal with their mannerisms, and their employment of the art of preaching, there was very much source material upon that. Biographers and historians have given us numerous glances into the personal characteristics, the education and the actual preaching ability, of many of these great men. We have sonic. of the sermons of Alexander Campbell, Walter W. Scott, Moses E. Lard, and others. We have descriptions of audiences, the story of their reactions to great and stirring addresses, the picturing of the sense of history-making occasions when the souls of these great leaders rose to the heights. We have the historic discussion of the forming of occasions out of which new and strong convictions came, when revolutionizing messages were delivered. Indeed, Brother Norred has favored us with some of these in his part of this volume.

Dr. Robinson observes in his book, "What Churches of Christ Stand For," that the Restoration Movement began with educated men. Men like the Campbells and Scott evidently thought upon the art of preaching, for they employed it with great effect. But they lived and moved in such history-making times that their energies and talents were expended upon the work to be done. They fought in an age when only the strong could survive; they sheathed not the sword of the Spirit all their days; they dared possess their own souls; they possessed a valor for the ancient order of things, for the old paths, that brought them into immediate conflict with the strongest leaders of the day. In the "Big Five" debates Alexander Campbell met Roman Catholicism, infidelity, sectarianism in all its forms. His polemical ability was supreme; his courage and originality unequaled since Paul's day.



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The content of their message, rather than the manner of their address, is shown clearly in such papers as "The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery." Here was a man pioneering, a man on the road back, a man conscious that he lived in a day when the majority of religious people had lost their way.

It was an age of "The Comer Outers," and so the thought of leaving carnal systems of doctrine was not an alien thought. This was one of the leading things in the minds of all those who, whether below the Ohio River or above it, sought for the restoration of the ancient order. They had become fully convinced that reform to the extent of going all the way back to the apostolic plan was impossible; only by coming out of these seas and parties could they become free enough to accept the divine order. They, therefore, burst the shackles of a narrow sectarianism so that they might be free. In the famous document dissolving the Springfield Presbytery we have a spiritual liberation of fearless souls, which, at the same time, and automatically, set them on the road back, and left them free to accept only, and in its entirety, the original teaching of Christ and the apostles.

The heart and core of the preaching of the pioneers came to be the Bible only. It was a negation of human traditions and the doctrines and tenets of men while it was the affirmation of the completeness and adequacy of the word of God. Since this involved a break with the traditional thinking of the day, and a rejection of the ways of men, something else needed to be offered, and that, too, was found immediately at hand; that was a basis of unity on the Bible only. It might be said that while with one fell stroke the Springfield Presbytery was slain, there emerged from its death a broad basis of union. In fact, that very thought was expressed. It was a desire of those who wrote this last will and testament that those whom it held in its unjustifiable confines should be merged with the church of Christ in general. And this same end was held in view in the "Declaration and Address." The brethren obligated themselves to speak where the Bible spoke and to be silent where A nos silent. Sectarianism was declared to be wrong, and the Bible only was declared to be the guide. And then to clarify this point, a discussion was engaged in that would set forth how the Bible obviously ought to be understood and interpreted.

Brother Norred has traced out the message of the pioneers, interesting us in the contents of their preaching. To those stu-

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dents familiar with this material, and this line of thinking already, this will be a real time of refreshing, and in his original outlining they will find a sense of direction given to the combined efforts of the pioneers; and to the student who has not had the opportunity to think on these things, this volume will bring some challenging thoughts.

Brother Yater Tant has had as good opportunity as any man among us in this generation to be conversant with the schools of thought. A graduate of one of our colleges, he also did graduate work in theology, in the Southern Baptist Seminary at Louisville, Ky. He has kept abreast of the times. He knows, as every informed student does know, that we no longer face precisely the problems that were faced by the Campbells, Scott, Stone and others. We cannot depart from their basis of thinking, but the amorphous mass of sectarianism is no longer what it was in their day.

Sectarianism used to be virile, if for no other reason than just to quarrel. Internecine strife and discord served to keep it alive. Party feuds stimulated it. It fed on its hates more than on its loves. Born in carnality, the carnality of party spirit, it survived while fed on the foul meat of rancor. Religion? Yes, there was some religion in its ranks, in spite of its origin. Some of the best men and women knew no other way to God except through it. They did not reach the point of being able to shake off its shackles, as did Stone and others. They accepted it as a matter of course. Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians stayed in their own party pastures; they did not mingle with one another in matters of divine fellowship and holy communion. No, indeed! Socially they might be the best of friends, but in matters divine they were poles apart, and such differences could not be mentioned without evil thoughts and rancor. Finally, by common consent, this incongruity was faced, and men and women began to play down their differences and to play up their unities. The result was a movement that engulfed all sectarianism. As extreme follows extreme, a swelling sentimentality overflowed their differences, and all of them turned into back-slappers, each endorsing every other contradictory thing. The mental incongruity did not seem to bother them. They began with one accord to say that it does not matter what you believe, just so you are honest! This movement was hardly under way in all the days of the pioneers. But in our day it is full-blown. In

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spite of this, though, there is another contradiction: Traditions of separate fellowships are perpetuated.

Sectarianism is now insipid, enervated, apathetic, without appeal, except as one has been reared traditionally in it. It is only kept alive by the native religious tendencies of people who know no better, and who love tradition. One does not encounter the same attitude in people when he goes preaching the Gospel to them today. The age of compromise is so great and the vast, appalling insipidity so universal, that if one preaches with the vigor against such things today as did the pioneers, he is running blindly into such a psychological outlook as to defeat his message in large measure. Shall he oppose error? Certainly! But he needs to know what is before him, and the temper of the times. Because he is steeped in a type of preaching by which we rid ourselves of sectarianism, and managed a restoration of the apostolic order, he must not depart from an awareness of the conditions which he must face. The pioneers faced their day, and won great victories. We have the same eternal message, but we cannot be an Ezekiel in a day of Moses. In the more than a hundred years since the pioneers there has been nearly as great a change in religious outlook as there has been progress in the material sciences. Brother Tant faces this matter.

The amorphous mass of sectarianism, with its new psychology, left it easy prey to the next great movement, which was the movement of modernism. The ground had been prepared for this seed. People had been urged, in forgetting their differences, to dispense with essential beliefs, anyway. And then the next step, to deny even the atoning blood of Christ, the virgin birth, and every other fundamental doctrine, followed as naturally as the night the day, as step on sky. After all, human events are related, concatenated, as Brother Stone observed.

Not alone do we face this new psychology, and this enervated sectarianism; we now face an age of infidelity, even in denominationalism, which is the worst the world has ever seen. This matter of preaching in the twentieth century, and preaching in a denominational world, is a matter requiring a vibrant acquaintance with living and changing conditions. Any preacher, or leader, or teacher, who reads this volume ought to be brought up to date. The old message? No, it has not changed! The old needs? No, they have not been outlived. But need more be said on this point?

## INTRODUCTION

When we face living conditions, we face them with the same old Gospel, which is an eternal Gospel. This point we must never forget, and we need a burning faith in this enduring Gospel in order to go to the world effectively. All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower of the fashion of it perishes, but the word of the Lord endures forever, and this is the word which by the Gospel is preached. We are not in the age of sectarian bitterness in which the Campbells lived; the temper of the people is different. If we employ successfully the wisdom with which God has endowed us, in recognizing conditions, then we can take that eternal Gospel to the world with telling blows. It will never return to the Lord in vain; it will accomplish the Lord's purpose.

However great the skill in the preacher's art, or however great the natural talents which a preacher may possess, he must know how to use the Gospel to do an effective work. And now, in the last section of this volume we come to a very fine re-statement of that by one of the ablest pulpit men of this generation, Brother Roy Cogdill. His section, "The Bible in Preaching," is a fitting one with which to close this volume. It leaves a ringing challenge, as it closes with a reaffirmation of the completeness and power of that Gospel to the task in hand, regardless of the conditions of men.

An age of infidelity and doubt is an age when convincing faith is needed. If the challenge of an age of skepticism is more accentuated—as this age of higher criticism, an infiltrated evolutionary hypothesis, modernism and premillennialism is—it also offers greater possibilities. The farther the denominations depart from the real teaching of the Bible, the more earnest souls can be reached, when the Gospel is preached. So instead of being a time when we can let tip, or should sense defeat, it is instead a time when a heroic defense of the Gospel should be made.

The great division that came in the ranks of the Restoration Movement over the innovations sapped the true cause of Christ for at least two generations. That time has passed. Preachers of the word have been multiplied. There are thousands of them today. They are able men. We have great writers, preachers, strong thinkers. If we have the misfortune not to recognize living merit, history is far more kind. Men of this generation will leave their mark.

The uniqueness of the position which we occupy on the alone

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sufficiency, of the Scriptures as a divine revelation, as the source of all spiritual light, in Brother Cogdill's section of this book is restated with ringing power. In a world where creeds abound, but are treated as indifferently as is the word of God; where traditions are followed, but with little reverence and respect; in a world where religion is as insipid as tepid water, and as weak as milk; in a world where the small needs of a religious life are supplied with a purely social gospel with a this-world appeal—in such a world as this, we have set before our minds again the great power of the Gospel as God's means unto our salvation.

Brother Sanders mentions in his part of this volume the "Sermon on the Law," which Campbell preached, and which had such far-reaching effects. Brother Cogdill comes back to that line of thought—the proper division of the word of the Lord—and with originality makes an exposition of God's plan.

The insipidity of this age of sectarianism, which refuses to face the realities of the fundamental doctrines of the Bible is no deterrent to a Gospel preacher. The Gospel must be preached in its entirety. The Old Testament must be understood; its prophecies must not be perverted; it must be accepted as leading up to the New—as type and shadow of better things to come.

In presenting the Christ to the world again, the Christ of the Gospels, Brother Cogdill has sensed the fact that sectarian bodies have identified themselves with the claims of Christ, and have made the acceptance of Christ the acceptance of their ridiculous claims. Dr. William Adams Brown has called this the sin of sins; and has named it the blocking of the way to the Christ by interposing the sign, "No Thoroughfare." He has also called it the institutional sin against the Holy Ghost. The Christ of the Scriptures is not a sectarian Christ. He is a Christ without and beyond the creeds—antedating them and independent of them. He alone has the words of eternal life. The Christ of the Gospels, not the Christ of the creeds, can save mankind. Gospel preachers must preach him, oblivious of the interposition of human creeds and opinions covering more than a thousand years; they must go all the way back, and preach all the way through what was said by him, and reported by those who heard him (Heb. 2:1-4).

The Ecumenical Movement (so-called) cannot unify mankind. Only one thing can, and that is the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ. To preach the Word is to preach the Lord Jesus Christ, with all

## INTRODUCTION

that he means to mankind. An outflowing of his sovereign will in the body of the redeemed, the called-out people, the church, will formulate itself then in the divine pattern as set forth in the New Testament, in doctrine, in organization, in worship, in life.

JOHN ALLEN HUDSON.

Los Angeles, California,  
March, 1945.

## PART I

*"And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.*

*For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

*And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.*

*And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power:*

*That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."—I Cor. 2:1-5.*

THE ART OF PREACHING

By

J. P. SANDERS

THE ART *OF* PREACHING

The *PLAN* OF THE SERMON

THE SUBJECT

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THE BODY

THE NECESSITY OF PROPER

ARRANGEMENT

THE CONCLUSION

ILLUSTRATING THE SERMON

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THE SERMON

RADIO PREACHING

*THE* EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SERMON

THE MEASURE OF THE SERMON



## THE ART OF PREACHING

Jesus magnified preaching. He himself came preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. When He returned to his native village after his ministry had begun, He read a text from the book of Isaiah which stated that He was anointed to preach the glad tidings to the poor. Paul rejoiced that he was a preacher of the gospel of Christ. "I thank him that enabled me, even Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted me faithful, appointing me to his service." Sometime later on, Paul charged Timothy to continue the work that he had begun. "I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quid, and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word." No more solemn responsibility could have been intrusted to the care of any living person, Paul made that charge even more solemn and serious by delivering it unto Timothy in the presence of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and in view of the judgment that Christ was going to make of all the world at his appearing and his kingdom. It is a serious and a noble task for anyone to stand in the presence of his fellow men to persuade them of their lost condition and to point them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Upon almost every occasion when a congregation is assembled for worship, there is someone present who is facing the greatest temptation or trial of his life. There is someone there facing the responsibility of making a difficult decision involving the problem of right and wrong. There is someone there who is discouraged and who needs to be strengthened in faith and hope and given a powerful reassurance of the integrity of God's promises. The ignorant are there who need to be taught the gospel plan of salvation in order that they might know the way to God: there may be one present who has never attended before and may never come again. The young are there who need to be counseled in Christian modes of conduct and purity of life. They need to learn the reasons for their hope and be sufficiently

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informed to combat the doubt and skepticism of their associates, including many of the teachers at whose feet they receive their secular educations. The old are there also, and they need the comfort and consolation that should attend them in their declining years. Each sermon may be the deciding point in some life. Something the preacher says will possibly determine the destiny of a soul for all eternity. Those people out there before him who come from week to week to worship God and who listen to his sermons need the most powerful message he is capable of delivering. They need to see the truth of God as it searches them out and draws the line of duty. They need to be brought face to face with their sins, to be convicted of sin's dreadful consequences and to be led to repentance. Think of the fearful consequences should the minister fail to inspire a proper decision because of a lack of effort and application on his part as a preacher of the gospel.

This may not be the place for a personal testimony, but I cannot refrain from taking this opportunity to witness for my Lord. The more I realize the seriousness of the accompanying responsibility, the happier I am that I am a preacher of the gospel of Christ. Continuing from my boyhood talks at prayer meetings, I have now been preaching the gospel for twenty years. Twice twenty years from now I hope that I shall still be preaching it and I will, if God gives me strength and longevity. If I had a thousand lives to live I should want to devote every one of them to declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ and telling the sweet story of Jesus and his sacrificial love. There is nothing in all the world comparable to it. I am sure that most of those who read these words share with me this conviction, for these pages have been written for preachers, and no one should be a preacher unless he would rather be a proclaimer of divine truth than anything else in the world. There are joys that the preacher of the gospel knows that the unchristian world will never know. To be conscious of having turned a soul from the way of the lost to the path of salvation, from darkness unto light, from sin and Satan to the Saviour, is a thrill to which nothing else can be compared. There are joys in preaching the gospel that fill the soul with indescribable delights. After all, there is no more joyful book in all the world than the Bible. It brings a message of light and redemption to those who are

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living in darkness. The New Testament begins with the joyous song of the angels announcing the birth of Christ. And time and time again throughout its pages we are admonished, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice."

The gospel preacher will never be materially rich. If he has any desires along this line he had better choose another field of endeavor. Just the same he has his rewards, and they are numerous. They are not carnal but spiritual—unseen and eternal. Let us remember that Paul said, "We are laborers together with God." O the joy of such companionship! Most of the professions and the business occupations in the world about us have grown up because men have seen the need of such services to society. The butcher and the baker and the electric light maker, all have services to render to their fellow men. The skilled physician occupies an honored place in the hearts of his fellows because he has ministered to their loved ones in times of illness. He renders a service that alleviates suffering and makes life more enjoyable. The school teacher serves the interests of youth, helping and guiding young persons to prepare themselves for service in a highly competitive world. There are many professions which are honorable and good but preaching is the work that is especially ordained of God. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature:" "I charge thee therefore . . . preach the word." Where is there to be found another task that can challenge the mind and heart of man with such a sense of divine responsibility and obligation!

Every high privilege that is to be enjoyed in life carries with it a weighty responsibility and makes the neglect and abuse of such a privilege a serious crime. The physician is guilty of criminal negligence if, through failure to study and apply himself, he allows a fellow creature to die who might otherwise have been saved by professional skill. He is highly honored when he does his work well, but when he neglects to perform his work properly he is deserving of scathing censure. Moreover, it is even worse to find a gospel preacher allowing people to remain dead in sin and trespasses when he is in a position to lead them into eternal life. The preacher has a more excellent opportunity to save people than other Christians have, for people come to him to be guided and look to him for leadership and example. Therefore, his responsibility is greater and he should consecrate

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all his talents and energies in preparing sermons which will directly apply to specific needs. He should also devote much time to making personal contacts. If he fails to win a soul for Christ because of willful negligence he is indeed the most contemptible of men. The minister should be exceedingly careful to handle aright the word of God in order that he may never throw a stumbling block in the pathway of another. If by careless handling of that which has been entrusted to his care he leads a soul into error, it would have been better if he had never been born; better if someone had tied a millstone about his neck and thrown him into the midst of the sea rather than that he should have abused the high privilege of preaching the gospel or neglected to perform his sacred duties; better that the mountains should fall upon him, hiding him "from the face of him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb." The magnitude of the responsibility of being a minister of God and the seriousness of failing to perform the task with skill and diligence, should send every preacher to his knees in prayer, should make him devote himself with unusual effort to the gaining of the knowledge and skills, and to the development of the type of personality that will make his service powerfully effective in the winning of souls.

### THE SUBJECT

In planning the sermon let the preacher show great care in the selection of a subject or a theme. A subject that is selected and set forth with care will go a long way toward making the sermon effective. The following points should be kept in mind in the selection and statement of one's subject:

(1) The subject should be accurate; it should state exactly what the preacher is going to talk about. Unless the preacher is careful in this respect the members of the church will soon come to feel that they can put no dependence in the announcement of his theme. The minister's subject may give promise of one kind of discussion but he is likely to preach something else. If the preacher makes for himself this kind of reputation the announcement of his themes will awaken but little interest in the minds of his congregation regardless of how interesting and challenging the theme may sound.

## THE SUBJECT

(2) The sermon subject should be clear. Clarity is saying a thing in such a way that it is not easily misunderstood.

(3) The subject should be both interesting and interestingly stated: it should appeal to the thinking of serious people and should be impressively worded. Great themes that strike down deep and touch the basic issues of life, that deal with sin, redemption, doctrine, the church, Christian conduct and spiritual growth, are the subjects that interest people. The superficial and the flippant cannot hold the interest of a congregation for long.

(4) The subject should not be sensational. Sensational topics do not satisfy the basic needs of human life. They may tickle the fancy for awhile, but they soon become empty and uninteresting. No preacher can feed his listeners on a diet of sensational preaching and develop good strong Christian persons who are growing in grace and in knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(5) The subject should be religious. People hear the secular every day. They read it in the newspaper; they see it in magazines. When they attend religious services they not only need but want something else. The preacher should never pass by an opportunity to meet a spiritual need, to satisfy the appetite of the soul, to provide for a man who hungers after righteousness. After all, the preacher is not an expert on political science, political economy, science, or economics. Very often someone within his audience is. When he deals with such subjects he usually makes himself foolish in the ears of his better informed listeners. Let the preacher draw his subject from the Scriptures. The Scriptures are a repository of subject materials that will help the preacher to be practical, helpful, and to deal with those themes which satisfy the spiritual yearnings of mankind. These themes will enable the preacher to bring the counsel of the Almighty to bear on the problems that people are facing and to show what the word of God teaches with reference to their duty and destiny.

What shall I preach? Where shall I find a subject? These are questions that a preacher often finds himself asking. Very often, too, it is near the end of the week before he gives serious consideration to the work of preparing his messages. No minister who is consecrated to his task will find himself in such a plight: the preacher who lives with his Bible and goes to it habitually for themes will never be at a loss for an appropriate and timely

## PREACHING IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

lesson. His pressing need is not to *find* a sermon subject but to select one from a long list of theme-ideas which he has stored up in his mind—every one of which he is longing eagerly to present to the congregation. The thoughtful, meditative reading of the Scriptures will yield far more subjects than he will have time to discuss, for the Bible covers the largest possible range of human experience. All the sins that men commit and all the virtues that they need are to be found there. The whole gamut of human experience is depicted there in principle if not in detail. All the duties and obligations of the human race are contained within its covers. There is also every conceivable promise of divine aid in time of need. These great subjects will make one's preaching so rich and significant that no worshipper need go away from the assembly feeling that he has lacked opportunity to gain great spiritual benefits.

### THE PLAN OF THE SERMON

The sermon should have a plan. Unless it does it may result in a production like that delivered by the person who took his text as a point of departure and went everywhere preaching the Word. It was utterly without form and void of any logical content. There was nothing comely about it. When finished, no one knew where he had arrived. Contractors who start building without a Plan will produce a house which has the appearance of having Just happened. The preacher whose sermon lacks a plan will produce a message which, to his audience, seems to have just happened. The plan is to the sermon what the blueprint is to the builder. Without it the work will be all topsy-turvy. It is the plan that gives coherence and unity to the entire sermon. Again we may think of the plan being to the sermon what the skeleton is to the body. It is the framework on which the other elements of the sermon are hung. The skeleton need not always be apparent. The person most comely in appearance is not the most angular and skeletal. But no one can say that a person is without a skeleton Just because it is covered with muscles, sinews, and good firm flesh, and cannot be seen. The preacher need not make the skeleton of his sermon obvious nor need he call the attention of his audience when he passes from the introduction to the discussion of point number one and point number two. Nevertheless, *such* an arrangement must exist

## THE INTRODUCTION

Where order, symmetry, and logical movement are to be found. Without them the sermon cannot long be remembered and will not be effective.

## THE INTRODUCTION

The introduction is to the sermon what a vestibule is to the house. Augustine said, "A beautiful house should be known as such even in the vestibule, and in the first step within there should be nothing of darkness, for the light of the lamp placed there shines upon the parts within." The first part of the sermon, then, should awaken an eager expectancy of what is to follow. It is the first contact that the speaker makes with his hearers. It should, therefore, attract favorable attention. Someone has said that if a man's extremities are well dressed he appears well dressed. If he has on a nice hat and a well shined, neat looking pair of shoes, he appears a well dressed person. No matter how fine his suit nor how well pressed it may be, if it is accompanied by a sloppy hat and by unshined *shoes*, he does not have a neatly dressed appearance; the introduction and conclusion of a sermon are just as effective in giving to a sermon a pleasing and polished appearance.

The introduction should be unusually interesting. The preacher has a message for his audience. He wants to project a great idea into their minds. His interest-stimulating introduction is the device by which he opens their minds to the consideration of his message. One might as well try to pour water into a jug that has the stopper in it as to try to put great living ideas into a mind that has not been opened by interest. One student revealed the attitude of many of his fellows when he said about chapel speakers, "I listen for the first two minutes and if the speaker does not seem to have anything to say, I stop listening and start thinking about something else." So in the first two minutes of an address one either takes hold of his audience or he loses it. A friend of mine was asked how he liked a certain speaker whom he went to hear in down-town Nashville. He replied, "I was so irritated by the first five minutes of his speech that I wouldn't listen to any of the rest of it." Regardless of the value that that speaker had in his message, it was all lost so far as this person was concerned. The introduction failed to serve its purpose. It closed the door of his mind rather than opening it.

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This speaker failed to establish a meeting of minds—he failed to find a starting point of common acceptance. A preacher in his introduction should break down barriers and prejudices and be mindful not to create them.

The introduction should not be verbose; rarely is there need that it be at all lengthy. However, it should be carefully planned and organized to present whatever challenging ideas are essential to arouse receptive interest in the minds of the audience. So a good introduction is a concise interest-stimulating group of statements which puts the speaker and listener on common ground and opens the mind of the listener by breaking down any existing barriers and by arousing no unfavorable prejudices. An introduction which does its work well helps to give tone and meaning to the entire sermon.

### THE BODY

The main portion of the sermon is usually known as the body. It is in this portion of the sermon that the preacher develops his theme, tells his story, marshals his argument, or conveys by one means or another the truth that he is desirous of mediating to those who are in the congregation. The exact form of this part will be determined by the nature of the sermon itself. If it is a textual sermon that is being presented, the divisions of this part will be determined by the particular text. If the sermon is expository in character the passage of Scripture being expounded will suggest the divisions. Various phases of the subject will suggest the divisions if the sermon be a topical one. There is no iron-clad rule to follow. It is best, however, that the number of divisions should not be too great and that they should be delivered in logical and orderly fashion. It may be that the body of the sermon is a series of facts the preacher has observed that need to be discussed with the congregation: for example, the reasons that people offer for non-attendance at the services of the church. When such a series of observations is offered a single train of thought should bind the ideas to the central purpose. Every far-flung bit of the discourse should have a root in the main theme in order that the sermon possess unity and coherence. In this way each observation that is presented will help serve the main purpose of the discourse. If these observations are disconnected they cannot be tied to the central theme,



## THE NECESSITY OF PROPER ARRANGEMENT

the discourse will be lacking 1 force and will not to easily retained by those who bear it.

## THE NECESSITY OF PROPER ARRANGEMENT

A logical and coherent arrangement is of value both to speaker and audience. If the speech has a logical arrangement it can be easily remembered. If the speaker finds it difficult to remember which point follows which, this difficulty is ail indication that the points are not arranged in logical order so that one naturally suggests or leads up to the other. Each particular thought should develop according to a growing situation within the discourse as a whole. The time spent in arranging a discourse with all of its details in orderly style will justify itself in the satisfaction that the speaker has in seeing its thought and feeling flow in natural order. Speakers who do not give thought to arranging the details of their discourse logically have to depend for the effects of their sermon simply upon the striking expression of certain particular thoughts, or on the possible impression of highly emotional moments. These are difficult to maintain; and when not backed by a context that logically supports them, they lack the added power which otherwise they might possess.

As important as proper order is to the speaker it is even more important to the listener. Even ail uneducated or illiterate audience recognizes the difference between a well ordered discourse and a poorly arranged one. Logical order makes a message easily remembered, carries conviction, and makes an impression that is long retained. A poorly arranged address, even though followed at the moment, cannot be easily held in the memory, and when the listener finds himself at home, it is with difficulty that he recalls the subject matter of the discourse. There is also the additional disadvantage that it may be misunderstood in such a way as to yield deplorable results. Every speaker should set for himself the goal of such coherence that the meaning cannot possibly be misunderstood.

Preaching aims at persuasiveness. The preacher is not only interested in detailing events or facts but in using them in such a way as to produce action, Logical order is of utmost importance in persuasive speaking. Peter's sermon on Pentecost is an excellent example in persuasiveness (A speech. A careful study of the order

## PREACHING IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

and arrangement of material that Peter used will be worth the time that any preacher finds to study it. He moved swiftly from one point to another in such orderly fashion as to produce the most profound conviction. When he had finished, the result was that his hearers were pricked in their hearts and they wanted to know what to do. The sermon had not simply conveyed information; it had carried the power of conviction—a conviction that we believe would have been impossible if Peter's arrangement had been illogical and lacking in coherence. If one wishes to break a hard rock with a hammer he does not strike it here and there at different points over the surface, but he concentrates his blows upon a certain point along a certain line. So when motives are brought to bear upon the will they produce convictions.

As an example of good planning that has helped to make a sermon unusually effective, consider Alexander Campbell's sermon on "The Law." Alexander Campbell took his text from Romans 8:3, "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." This sermon may be found in full in the *Millennial Harbinger* of 1846. This was one of the greatest sermons of his time and it produced a mighty and epochal effect. For the first time in generations he drew clearly the distinction between the law and the Gospel. He showed that the law was an entirely temporary and local covenant, but the Gospel is universal and for all time. The patriarchal was the starlight; the Jewish dispensation was the moonlight; John the Baptist was the twilight; the Christian dispensation beginning with the coronation of Christ and the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost was the full sunlight. The patriarchs had the bud, the Jews the blossom, the Christians had the matured fruit of divine grace. The following is the outline:

- "(1) Endeavor to ascertain what ideas we are to attach to the phrase, 'the law; in this and in similar portions of the sacred Scripture.
- (2) Point out those things which the law could not accomplish.
- (3) Demonstrate the reason why the law failed to accomplish those objects.
- (4) Illustrate how God has remedied those relative defects of the law.

## THE CONCLUSION

(5) Deduce such conclusions from these premises as would obviously and necessarily present themselves to every unbiased and reflecting mind."\*

Few sermons have had the effect that this one has had. It is so logical in its arrangement and so clear and complete in the exposition of the Scripture that one almost wonders how it could be otherwise—yet one cannot help but know that such a masterpiece is the result and fruit of laborious and scholarly study. It shows a deep and penetrating insight and a masterful exegesis of the Scriptures with which it deals. The entire sermon is worthy of meticulously careful reading and of diligent study as a model of homiletical excellence.

## THE CONCLUSION

The conclusion is an integral part of the sermon. Too often preachers prepare the main part of the sermon and leave the conclusion to happenstance, to whatever happens to come to the mind at the time the sermon is delivered. The effect of many a sermon is ruined by this kind of carelessness in respect to the conclusion. Like the introduction it should be carefully thought through in advance so that the entire effect of the arrangement, logic and oratory of the discussion may come to a focus in the listener's mind in these last few moments of speaking. It is not the place for the introduction of new material but a place where the total effect of all that has gone before can be used to produce action or to get results. This part of the sermon is not simply a place for recapitulating the entire production nor for summarizing the points that have gone into the theme. If a summary is attempted it should be done in such a way as to bring the total force of all that has gone before into one moment of appeal. The wooing element should be apparent in every word of the conclusion. Preaching is not simply telling people something but getting them to do something. Into the conclusion, even though brief, there should be packed an elective appeal to move men to action.

In order for one to get into the habit of not overlooking his conclusion, a wise plan is to write out carefully the conclusion to every sermon. This prevents the conclusion becoming a mere matter of chance and enables the speaker to put into it the care,

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\*American Church History Series, Volume 12, Page 68,

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the concern, and all the skill which he can command in order to achieve an effective result. Some preachers end all of their sermons alike; this is usually the result of a lack of care given to planning the end of the sermon. If one will give himself to the writing of his sermon conclusions, at least for awhile, this monotonous effect can be avoided. Some conclusions remind one of a bird flying to and fro in the air looking for a place to alight. The effect of the sermon is lost if it is brought to a conclusion in any such circling fashion as this. Whereas, if one has taken the pains to write out the last half dozen sentences of his sermon, with a few deft, swift sentences he can lodge his message in the minds of his hearers and then stop.

It is always much better for a person to get up from the dinner table before his appetite is completely satiated. It is much more effective in preaching for one to leave his audience wishing that he had spoken longer than for them to wish that he had stopped three or four points earlier. They are more likely to come back for more if they are still hungry than when they are so completely satiated that they have arrived at a condition of boredom and lethargy. It goes almost without saying that each sermon should have only one conclusion. If the speaker says "in conclusion" several times, he automatically loses all his effectiveness by the time he stops. It is impossible to move the will of the people to any desired action if the conclusion of the sermon is drawn out with tiresome digression and repetitions. Many preachers have found it worth while to make a conclusion a means of showing the audience how to directly apply the message to themselves. Daniel Webster once said, "When I attend upon the preaching of the Word I wish to have it made a personal matter." Preaching that isn't personal really isn't preaching. The message cannot be of any very great value to the kingdom of God unless it finds the individual man. But if each person sees in the sermon something that makes his own duty clearer, the message becomes an effective tool in the improvement of his life.

Emotion may be a distinctive note in the conclusion. The consecrated preacher is concerned about the spiritual condition of each member in the assembly, and since he is truly desirous of seeing them turn from sin to God, from a life of waywardness to the path of right, he cannot but be emotional about it. The anxiety that the Christian messenger has within his heart over the state of those

## ILLUSTRATING THE SERMON

to whom he is speaking will necessarily express itself in the emotions of his voice and bearing. Peter must have brought his sermon on Pentecost to a close with a very effective emotional appeal. "With many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation." (Acts 2:40.) People not only have to be shown what is right but they have to be persuaded to accept it. Great decisions should not be founded on an emotional basis but nearly all decisions involve emotions. The utterances of the prophets in appealing to the people of Israel to repent and turn to the Lord did abound with emotion. Deep and powerful emotional appeal is seen all the way through many of the speeches of Jesus to the Jews. He was not indifferent to the destiny of doom that was impending upon those who refused to accept His gospel. It was with great pathos, tenderness and weeping that he appealed unto them to come to him. The effectiveness of many an argument in the main discourse of a sermon is lost because the conclusion does not contain a strong emotional appeal to persuade the person to act on what he has been taught to believe. If a minister would increase the effectiveness of his preaching he should give more careful thought to the sermon's closing words.

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After the sermon has been planned and the main ideas arranged in their most logical and useful order, the preacher should busy himself in finding illustrations that will be apt in making his meaning more apparent and comprehensible to his audience. The proper use of apt illustrations enhances the effectiveness of any sermon so much that it is thoroughly worth while to learn to use them skillfully.

An adept use of illustrations is an art in itself, for the illustration to be really valuable must meet precise specifications. It must be exactly relevant: otherwise it will confuse and not illuminate. It must utilize a familiar idea or it cannot explain an unfamiliar one. It should hold interest on the key idea of the sermon and should never be introduced merely for its own sake or even for the purpose of relaxing mental tension or strain. Jesus was a master in the use of wonderfully appropriate word pictures to convey his messages. In using numerous illustrations, He set an example which many of the greatest and most effective preachers have followed.

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The type of illustration which Jesus used freely in His preaching is the parable. There are more than thirty specific parables mentioned in the four gospels and the word parable itself occurs fifty odd times in the New Testament. The word means "to place beside" of thus, a comparison can be made between the familiar and the unfamiliar, between the concrete facts that are well known to people and the abstract truths which the teacher wants them to understand. Sometimes Jesus' parables were short epigrammatic statements contained within a single sentence; sometimes they were worked out in story form and occupied almost a chapter. By means of them Jesus explained the nature of the kingdom of God to his disciples and to the multitudes. A parable is a means of translating a difficult idea into meaningful language. It pictures a great spiritual truth so that people can comprehend it. Parables make the truth impressive so that people can remember it. There are also other reasons why Jesus spoke in parables, but to his disciples they served the main purpose of interpreting the principles of the kingdom of God. In considering the Sermon on the Mount, the scholar finds that there are fifty-six figures of speech within this sermon. These figures of speech make Jesus' meaning clear and concrete. Jesus did not address the people in abstract, philosophical terms, but in clear, concrete, vivid pictures that etched deep images on their memories. It is no wonder that the people were astonished at his teaching! After listening to the dull, dry, abstract, philosophical teaching of the scribes and Pharisees, the parabolic teaching of Jesus was as welcome as the shadow of a rock in a desert land.

The paramount purpose of the illustration is to make plain that which is obscure, to throw light on a subject and illuminate its meaning, or to clarify the signification of a term. Unless the audience understands the ideas as they are presented in a sermon they will not try to follow long. For this reason, it is well to introduce the familiar to clarify the unfamiliar. Jesus said that "men do not put new wine into old bottles" to explain why he and his disciples did not fast as John and his disciples fasted.

The story is told that Daniel Webster was employed to defend the manufacturer of a certain mill wheel who was being sued because of an infringement on patent rights. After the lawyer for the plaintiff had made a long and learned plea, Webster arose and simply said, "Your Honor, and gentlemen of the Jury, without

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argument I wish to submit two pieces of evidence." Then the attendant brought in two wheels, the wheels that were at issue, and Webster said, "Look at the difference between those two wheels." He won his case. An illustration, is a means of making people see what you are trying to say. Webster made the jury *see* what he wanted them to know. The preacher can rarely present material objects to explain his sermons but he can do the next best thing if he will present word pictures of his ideas and tell graphic examples to illustrate his points.

The meaning of the illustration itself must be perfectly clear and apparent, and it must be an accurate parallel to the particular idea it is used to clarify. Otherwise it defeats its purpose. "Arguments are the pillars of a discourse; illustrations are the windows which let in the light." But if the windows are dirty and the panes broken, the pillars will be blotched with distorting shadows. All unadept illustration will result in confusion and will further obscure a complex idea.

Illustrations should never be employed for their own sake. When one is tempted to build a sermon around some good illustration that he feels is especially interesting, let him flee from that temptation. The purpose of the illustration in the gospel sermon is never to entertain but to inform, to clarify, and to interest. When an illustration is interjected into the message for its own sake, one's purpose in preaching is detoured from the main path of gospel evangelism.

Another valuable use of illustration is that of arresting and holding attention. For this an illustration may be used in the introduction of the sermon. Well-chosen illustrations properly spaced or scattered throughout the sermon will help to retain attention all the way through. An illustration, to be effective in holding attention, should not be too long; and the preacher need not belabor himself in pointing out the meaning of the illustration itself. Jesus passed quickly from one to another of the parables recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. Illustrations afford variety and rest to the mind which is very important in gaining the involuntary attention of the listener.

Dr. H. H. Horn takes note of the fact that there are two kinds of attention, voluntary and involuntary. Voluntary attention is that which is given as an act of the will and which necessarily requires effort to keep one's mind focused on the object of his

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attention. Involuntary attention is naturally given, without effort on the part of the listener. It was this latter, involuntary attention that Jesus secured almost exclusively from his listeners. His messages were so interesting, so vital, they struck so deeply at the roots of human life and experience, they were so well illustrated and pictorial, that people listened in rapt attention without conscious effort. It has been said that Alexander Campbell sometimes preached for two hours and a half, and his audience went away feeling that he had preached no longer than thirty minutes. Such attention is involuntary and is the kind that every speaker should seek to secure for himself.

Another purpose of the illustration is to so impress an idea upon the memory that it will not be soon forgotten. The parable of the prodigal son was spoken by Jesus to his carping critics for the purpose of illustrating God's anxiety and concern for the lost and sinful. It has become the most familiar short story in all great literature. No one who has heard it can possibly forget it; and is one remembers the story, he is reminded of the truth which it illustrates. Many sermons are remembered simply because of the illustrations contained within them. A series of suitable illustrations applying to each point in the sermon may well form a frame-work for the more theoretical content of the sermon. Without such aid the abstract truths could not be so long retained. Word pictures are able to stamp their images on the mind's eye with great indelibility.

### THE SOURCE OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Where are to be found enough illustrations to provide the need of preaching week after week to the same congregation of people? Many a young preacher finds himself asking this question. But let him lift up his eyes. Illustrations are all around him. Jesus used varied illustrations from man sources. He selected some from the history of the Jews to be found in the Old Testament. He made a reference to the days of Noah as a type of the days of the Son of Man. He told the story of Jonah securing the repentance of the Ninevites as a result of his preaching to them. He called the attention of his audience to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and to the visit of the Queen of Sheba to see the glory of Solomon. He called the attention of his hearers to



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Zacharias who died between the horns of the altar. He referred to the falling of the tower of Siloam and to the conditions of the cities of Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida. Jesus drew many of his illustrations from nature. The kingdom of heaven was like a grain of corn falling into the earth and dying and bringing forth new life. He noticed the grass which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven; the lily of the field, which is more beautiful than Solomon in all of his glory. He knew that two sparrows were sold for a farthing and that no one of them fell to the earth without God noticing it. He called their attention to the redness of the evening sky as a sign of fair weather on the morrow. He referred to the hen gathering her chickens under her wing, to the fox in his cunningness, the wolf in his cruelty, the dog in his sympathy, to the farmer sowing his seed, and to the husbandman dressing the vines, to the builder in his temple, and to the ruler bestowing trust upon his subjects. In all the world around him Jesus found illustrations to explain His divine truths, illustrations from the everyday lives of his fellowmen that men might see what he wanted them to understand. There are illustrations everywhere. Here are some very fruitful sources from which they may be taken.

*History.* There is one sense in which each historical event is an unique event and then another sense in which history repeats itself. Despite the various conditions under which we live today, and the difference between these conditions and those that prevailed thousands of years ago, human nature remains essentially the same, subject to the same passions, emotions, and desires. History becomes then a very fruitful field for the selection of apt illustrative material. The historical section of the Old Testament is especially fruitful. Paul said that these things were written for our example. The wise preacher will familiarize himself with it. Such illustrations serve the double purpose of throwing light upon the matter that the preacher has in his sermon and also of familiarizing his audience with the stories of the Old Testament. Secular history, when wisely and judiciously employed, is the basis of many an excellent illustration. The history of the restoration movement in America is also a fruitful source of material. The young preacher will do well to acquaint himself with it.

*Literature.* Both past and contemporary literature contain many valuable illustrations. One should learn to watch for illustrations in all of his reading in these fields. Biographies are a particularly

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fine source for exemplary material. There is a great deal of fine poetry which the minister will find useful; besides drawing excellent pictures it adds diversion and has an emotional appeal which prose often lacks.

*Science.* Science furnishes another fruitful field in illustrative material. The universe about us is the work of God just as the Bible is the word of God. Jesus drew many of his illustrations from nature. Since God is the author of nature these illustrations have a special appeal. The handiwork of God is all around us, and many spiritual truths may be made clear through the understanding of natural phenomena.

*The Scriptures.* The whole Bible, as well as its historical portions, is replete with illustrations suitable for use. Preaching must always and upon all occasion, be scriptural. The use of scriptural illustrations helps to make it such. The more familiar people are with the Scriptures the more they appreciate and understand the significance of illustrations drawn from its pages. The more highly the word of God is held in reverence the more effective these illustrations become to one's sermon.

There is a very extensive field to be explored in gathering illustrative material for messages of divine truth. Let one remember that as a rule home-grown illustrations are better than canned ones. Those that come directly from one's own study of the word of God are those that have a freshness and a vitality about them which will add to the interest of the listener and to the effectiveness of the message. The preacher should always remember that all non-biblical illustrations are used only for the purpose of clarifying and never for the purpose of proof. Only the Scriptures carry the weight of divine authority and can be used as incontrovertible truth.

## DELIVERING THE SERMON

There is one sense in which the sermon exists only during delivery. Prior to that time it exists in preparation in the mind of the speaker. Following delivery it exists only in the memory. Delivery is the transference of the message from the mind and heart of the speaker to the mind and heart of the hearer. Just as giving implies a receiver as well as a donor, so delivery implies lodging in the heart of the hearer the truths spoken by the speaker. The telegraph company does not consider a message delivered just be

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cause it is thrown out of the door in the direction of a particular house. Neither is a sermon delivered just because someone stands up and says words. Delivery implies a skill and effectiveness which carries its message into the heart of the hearer and lodges it there.

Throughout the history of preaching three principal methods of delivery have been usually employed. The first is, the reading of the message from the manuscript. This method is but rarely employed by the preachers of the churches of Christ. The manuscript constitutes a kind of barrier or non-conductor between the speaker and the listener. The second method is the speaking from memory of what has been carefully written beforehand. This method of delivery involves not only the writing of the message but the laborious task of committing it to memory before it is delivered.

The method most generally employed and which, too, is generally the most effective, is that of extemporaneous delivery. This method of delivery should by no means preclude the most thorough preparation. The sermon should be very carefully planned and organized: the ideas clearly thought through in one's mind, copious notes made to aid during the period of preparation, an able introduction devised, apt illustrations carefully selected and placed, and a conclusion diligently prepared to bring the message to a forcible close. With this plan of the sermon well in mind the speaker may then rely on the occasion for the exact language by which his thought is carried to his hearers. Extemporaneous speaking may lack the finished polish of a carefully prepared literary production, but it will possess a freshness and a directness of appeal that is rarely found on the written page.

Christ spoke directly from his heart to the people who were before him. It would be difficult to imagine Jesus reading a manuscript of His sermons. The apostle Peter did not read his sermon on the day of Pentecost from a parchment, nor did Paul on Mar's Hill recite from memory what he had carefully written beforehand. However, it is not necessarily objectionable if the preacher has some carefully prepared notes before him while delivering the sermon. These should constitute the bare outline of the sermon, and they should never be followed so slavishly as to make the audience aware that one needs to constantly refer to them. If the sermon has been logically prepared and arranged, the points will usually be easily remembered and notes will be almost unnecessary.

The preacher should guard his voice with great care. Since it

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is the chief instrument of his delivery, he should be unusually kind to it, and he should keep himself in vigorous health, avoiding exposure and abuse of any kind that might put unusual strains on the voice. If the young preacher has difficulty with his voice he should seek the expert advice of a qualified speech teacher or someone else whose training has prepared him to give wise counsel. If one should be unfortunate enough to possess a voice that is so unusually rasping and harsh that it gets on the nerves of his hearers, he should not despair but should set about to improve it. Fortunately, with proper guidance and with the extreme discipline of a thorough and arduous training process, speech difficulties may usually be eliminated. Many of the world's great speakers have had perplexing vocal handicaps to overcome. With proper concern and study devoted to the development of the right kind of voice for speaking delivery, most men are able to conquer their difficulties and master the fundamental vocal techniques.

One should begin the sermon with a certain amount of calm and restraint. The conversational tone will provide one with the moderation with which he should begin and will prevent his straining his voice before the sermon is completed. If one begins his sermon on too high a pitch, it is very difficult to change it; and before the conclusion is reached one finds himself with an irritated throat. The full force of one's feeling should never be unleashed in the introduction to the sermon. As a result of his study and preparation he may be very emotional about what he has to say. This may give rise to the tendency to begin with full speed. But he should remember that his audience is not prepared to begin in that fashion. The people who constitute the congregation have not gone through that period of preparation and study. They will have to start slowly and be gradually led up to the full climax of feeling which the preacher has within his own heart when he begins. When the preacher is thoroughly convinced of the truth that he is relating he need never fear but that he may begin slowly and with reserve and that his earnestness will impart to his message a warmth of fervor and a glow of enthusiasm that will convince his hearers of the truth of his message. The young preacher especially should guard himself against speaking too rapidly. One cannot imagine Jesus speaking with the speed of a Walter Winchell in relating the parable of the prodigal son. Of course, one should never go to the opposite extreme and drawl what he has to say.

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The preacher should speak slowly enough to enunciate properly and to speak distinctly. One's voice carries much farther when one speaks slowly and distinctly. None of the sounds of any word should be slighted. It is, however, far more common to slight the consonant sounds rather than the vowel sounds. The preacher should learn to be especially careful here. The aspirate sounds especially should always be carefully formed. The pronouncing of them with extreme care gives distinctness to what he has to say so that he will be much more easily understood. Those people in the audience who ordinarily have some difficulty in hearing, greatly appreciate the careful pronouncing of consonant sounds. They will be able to understand although they do not understand the average speaker.

A brief statement about gestures needs also to be made. The young preacher is very often bothered about the problem of gesturing. As good a rule to follow as can be given is this: never try to make a gesture. Gestures should always seem to be involuntary and should be characterized by naturalness and freedom. One need never fear that he will have too few, of them. The great danger is in having too many. When one forgets himself in the interest and enthusiasm that he has for his subject, he will naturally interject those movements of hand and body that will augment and add force to his words. If one becomes unnatural and gestures are introduced voluntarily at carefully studied and prepared places, the effects will be awkward and artificial. If one could only become as natural as little children the problem of gesturing would take care of itself. The young preacher should be especially careful about imitating the gestures of older preachers. Those that are natural to the speaking style and the personality of one man may be entirely awkward and meaningless when employed by another. Forget yourself and do not try to be anyone else and your bodily movements will come freely and naturally.

The preacher of the gospel should seek to avoid all clumsy and irritating mannerisms. They direct attention away from his message to himself, consequently defeating his purpose and decreasing effectiveness. The preacher should learn to stand so as to give the appearance of being well poked and always at ease. He should consciously avoid any awkward or unbecoming posture while standing or while seated. Since the preacher is usually on the pulpit by himself and is with more than two or three others only

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on rare occasions, the eyes of all the congregation are generally focused upon him. Consequently any awkwardness or uncomeliness becomes apparent to all who are present, deflecting their attention from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Let the preacher give attention, also, to the manner in which he dresses himself. The person who is properly dressed is so attired that his clothing goes unnoticed; it is modest rather than ostentatious. It is neither flashy nor shabby, for either one of these conditions will call unfavorable attention to his appearance. If the minister's clothing is soiled or unpressed and his shoes unshined, these things will not go unnoticed, and the attention of at least some individual is certain to be diverted from the message. It may be the more worldly who notice these things, but after all, they are the ones who need the message most; the spiritual, whose attention is not so easily deflected by appearances, do not stand in as great need of the message as the others. The preacher, consequently, should take care that his appearance and manner be above reproach so that he will never be guilty of drawing to his person the attention which should have been given to his message. A new, smooth running automobile in no way calls attention to the operation of its various parts; but if a fender has been crushed or if the bearings are knocking, attention is immediately directed to them. When such mechanical things as one's stance and dress are so adjusted as to be habitually proper, then one can afford to forget himself and be concerned wholly with his message and his audience. It is only in complete self-abnegation that one realizes the full possession of his powers and abilities.

The preacher who makes the greatest appeal looks at his audience while speaking. No salesman looks at the ceiling while trying to sell his product to a customer, nor does the insurance man stare out the window into space while trying to get his prospect's name on the dotted line. Eyes meet when individuals are introduced to one another, and a person's handshake is meaningless unless his eyes express friendship, too. When lovers converse, their eyes say far more than do their lips. Expressions in the speaker's eyes convey attitudes and sentiments; they show his earnestness or his indifference, his love or his hatred. So the preacher, too, should use his eyes to express to his listeners the seriousness of his endeavor to win them to his cause. A searching, scrutinizing gaze exerts a powerful influence on a congregation, and the minister

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cannot afford to neglect the use of such a magnetic and appealing force.

## RADIO PREACHING

The radio presents an opportunity for carrying the gospel to a very wide range of hearers that otherwise could not possibly be reached. One who plans to engage in this kind of preaching would do well to study the special features which influence the effectiveness of radio speaking. Here an exception can be made from the general rule concerning types of delivery. The prepared manuscript for a speech which is to be broadcast is favored above the extemporaneous speech. Radio speaking needs to be timed to the minute. The inspiration of the moment is lacking to most speakers since the audience is not visible. The speaker is likely to find himself nervous, lest he speak too rapidly and finish before the time is up. On the other hand, he may introduce too much material on his various points and find the last minute approaching before he has presented all the material prerequisite to his concluding statement. Most speakers will be able to present a more effective address if the message has been carefully written and presented over the radio from the manuscript.

There is a power in the speaker before his audience, however, that the radio cannot transmit and that even television will prove short of handling adequately. The presence of the living agent is essential to the most outstanding and challenging preaching. It is doubtful if Demosthenes could have stirred the people of Athens with his wonderful Philippics if he had been addressing them over radio. Neither could Napoleon have maintained the remarkable power that he exercised over his soldiers had he not appeared before them face to face to deliver his short fiery speeches. Paul stood before Felix and reasoned with him of righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come. So powerful was the effect of his message that Felix was terrified and trembled. Yet one cannot imagine Felix being terrified in this fashion if he had been listening to a speech over a radio. This is not said in any way to depreciate the valuable opportunities of radio preaching, but it is the author's conviction that nothing can ever take the place of the living preacher. With the living message of truth standing before a congregation of eager people who are thirsting for the living water of eternal life.

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A sermon is as long as it seems. Most of us do not possess that remarkable ability of holding our audience spellbound for two and one half hours as Alexander Campbell often did; hence we had better confine our efforts to a shorter period. There is little value in giving an audience more than it can possibly take away. It is much better to lodge a few definite truths in the minds of the people than to offer them so many ideas that they become confused and none of the truths lodge. The value of a sermon does not depend on its length. If everything that Jesus spoke in his Sermon on the Mount is recorded in Matthew's gospel, it could have been delivered in less than fifteen minutes. There are no wasted words, there is no useless repetition; it was spoken straight from the shoulder in simple language that could be easily understood, and it so powerfully affected the hearers that they went away realizing that Jesus had spoken to them not as the Scribes and the Pharisees but as one possessing authority. It is never wise to keep talking after one has run out of something to say. When one's message has been finished he should stop speaking. Though very short, the sermon will be more effective for good than if it is lengthened simply by multiplying words without knowledge. The preacher is not to be heard for his much speaking nor his use of vain repetition. Sermons that are too long could have been shortened to a great advantage if they had been more carefully prepared and planned.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SERMON

Rarely is preaching so well done that the possibility of any improvement is entirely eliminated. The preacher who is wise and who is going to grow in usefulness to the kingdom of God and to his fellow men will seek to make his preaching more and more effective. On almost every occasion when one presents himself before an audience there is some person present who is facing a crisis in life. A preacher who stands behind the cross of Christ and brings a message fresh from the word of God, and who presents it with force and clarity, may be the means of helping this person make the decision which will put him in the upward path. To the end that more and more such persons may be helped in the way of life the preacher will be constantly striving to increase the effectiveness of his preaching. That there is a difference in the effectiveness of sermons is a fact that is well known and



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obvious to everyone. Some preachers are by nature more effective and talented speakers than others; but there are times when every minister is conscious of having delivered a more effective sermon than he usually does. Even the best of preachers reach 'Abe heights" only on rare occasions; so they always have a greater standard for which to strive: "the heights" on every occasion. There are many factors which enter into the effectiveness of any sermon. There is space for only a few of them in this discussion.

To be effective the preacher must first of all love people. When Jesus stood in the presence of multitudes his heart went out to them in compassion because he saw them as sheep not having a shepherd. The preacher stands in the presence of dying men and women who are lost and who need the word of God; unless he possesses a genuine concern and care for their souls there will always be a hollow ring in everything that he says. Even though he possesses a marvelous gift of oratory he will be as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. He stands as the messenger of Him who "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Unless his own heart is filled with that same love he can never be a very effective agent to declare that love unto a ruined and needy world. "One loving spirit sets another on fire," is the way one of the early churchmen described the growth and progress of Christianity in his era. Unless the preacher has within his own heart a spark from the flame that burns for all mankind, he will never truly and impressively represent God to his fellow men.

So great was Paul's affection for the members of his own race that he said, "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh." Moses also expressed this same great and deep concern for his people, the Israelites, when he said, "Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their sins, and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." This longing earnestness for the salvation of the souls of people should express itself in the spirit and manner of the preacher, should be breathed into his sermons, should actuate him in all his duties of life. Joan of Arc was once asked the secret of her power over the French army. This was her answer, "I tell my own to go in boldly against the English, and then I go in boldly myself." In her reply is expressed the key to all good and able leadership,

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One who loves his fellow men will seek to know them. Jesus knew men; he knew what was in man. He knew man's thinking. He knew man's emotions, feelings, and inclinations. He knew what it means to be tempted. This knowledge of people is an essential quality of any great teacher or preacher. Understanding human nature, whether gained through experience or through scientific study, preferably by both of them together, is an essential tool in the equipment of the gospel preacher. just as the carpenter must know not only his tools but his wood, so the gospel preacher must know people as well as the Bible. With his tools the carpenter shapes wood into the desired form; by means of the Scriptures properly employed in the gospel sermon, the preacher helps to shape the raw material of human personality into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

It is not enough that one should merely know people, but he should be as well acquainted as possible with the persons, the individual members, to whom he preaches regularly. In their Yes there will arise problems which they will not be able to solve without help, encouragement, and sympathy. There will be those who sorrow and need to be comforted; there will be those who waver and need to be guided; and there will also be those who fall into grievous sin and need to be lifted. The problems of a moral and spiritual nature which persons face will suggest many a splendid sermon subject to the alert and wide-awake preacher of the gospel. To know people and their needs will save the preacher from a sense of futility in his work. He will be conscious of bringing those messages that are most greatly needed in helping the people to solve the problems that are confronting them every day that they live. Instead of preaching about the sins of the people who live on the other side of the world he will be preaching about their own sins and helping them to overcome them. Achievement is a mighty spur, and the preacher who can actually see the fruitfulness of his preaching in the Res of people, senses a victory which in turn makes him a greater person and a better preacher.

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Effective preaching must be scriptural preaching. Not all interesting sermons are effective sermons; so to be interesting is not enough, The gospel preacher is not concerned with entertaining his audience but is eager to make an appeal to the hearts of men, causing them to seek purity and holiness of life, His paramount

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aims are to convert the alien sinner to the Christ, to instruct and to build up the immature Christians, to strengthen in righteousness those who are more mature, and to reclaim the wanderer.

Let the preacher use plain language that people can understand. Plain speech, however, is not to be confused with that which is low and trivial, much less with that which is vulgar. The Bible is recognized as the greatest literature of all time, and its language is easy and plain. The speech of Jesus, the greatest teacher the world has ever known, is characterized by simple, apt, familiar, unaffected expressions. One would do well to ponder carefully the Sermon on the Mount and the parables of Jesus. The language is simple, the words are short, the sentences are direct; and they carry their message to the human heart in such a way that it cannot be easily forgotten. Speech that is filled with long, multi-syllabled words is more likely to be awkward than beautiful and tends to remind the listener of a yard grown high with ugly weeds rather than to leave him the intended impression of a lovely garden profuse with stately lilies. The literary genius could produce this latter picture in a written work, but it is well for the preacher to leave eloquence to the man of letters for the simple reason that high-sounding, affected phraseology in verbal messages is difficult and confusing even for the literate to follow. Consider the following sample: "The incomprehensibility of the apparatus developed in the machinery of the universe may be considered a super eminent manifestation of stupendous majesty, whether a man stands on the platform of his own mind and ponders scrutinizingly on its undecipherable character, or whether he looks abroad over the magnificent equipment and irregularities of nature surveying its amplitudes and all their profundities." Such language is burdened with a cargo of weighty words, and a sermon constructed entirely out of such language would prove boring and ineffective. Dr. Charles R. Brown calls attention to the simplicity of the speech of Mark Antony at the funeral of Julius Caesar:

"I am no orator, as Brutus is:

But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man,  
That love my friends; and that they know full well  
That gave me public leave to speak of him:  
For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth."

In this passage of forty-five words, forty-one of them are monosyllables. To be effective the preacher must use words that go

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straight to men's hearts. Words that are short and simple usually do this better than any other kind. Simplicity of diction is a quality of style which is particularly appealing in expressing emotions and attitudes, and since sermons so frequently deal with these, the minister should build up a rich vocabulary of short, meaningful, pithy words. With only a meager vocabulary at his disposal a preacher will not be able to convey a great variety of shades of meaning; but with a fluent command of simple, expressive language he is able to explain to the satisfaction and understanding of every listener the exact signification even of a highly complex idea.

Clear and simple expressions of great truths are the result of clear thinking. Unless one's ideas are clear in one's own mind he is not likely to reveal them with any degree of clarity to his audience. Unless his thinking is clear the ideas he portrays to the audience will be like images seen obscurely through a cracked and smoky window glass.

In addition to expressing himself with clarity, the preacher must also seek to express his ideas forcefully. Force or energy of style is "one's capacity for exercising influence or producing an effect." This quality makes the message carry conviction and inspires the audience to have confidence in the speaker. Force implies the ability to urge irresistibly, to compel magnetically so that the listener will follow where the speaker leads. The enthusiasm and stimulation conveyed through a forceful message actuates the audience to be "doers of the word, and not hearers only" of but if speech is weak and vacillating no one will respond with any degree of enthusiasm. "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" Enthusiasm is just as contagious as the measles; and unless the preacher has caught it himself, he cannot transmit it to anyone else.

Preaching that impresses the audience for right and truth comes from strong, forceful personalities, whose very manner of life gives strength and meaning to the sermon. Unless one really means what he says, unless the messenger himself is sold on the message, unless the word of God has been woven into the warp and the woof of the speaker's own personality, it is improbable that the sermon will be delivered with forceful effectiveness. This worthy and high aim can never be accomplished apart from scriptural, Bible teaching and preaching, for it is in the Bible that the mystery

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of man's salvation and the secret of righteousness are revealed. It is on the pages of the Bible that the perfect pattern for virtuous character is outlined, and the Designer of the Christian way of life is unveiled in all of His purity and goodness. Without the Bible the world could not know the great truths about the universe and guiding principles of life. Without the revelation of the Scriptures, the preacher's sermon would be barren—in fact, there would be no message at all.

In order that he might mediate Bible truth unto those who know it not the preacher himself must be master of its contents. He cannot preach effectively if he is ignorant of the Bible. If he would win others to Christ, Jesus must be his dear and intimate friend, not merely an honored acquaintance. The Bible must be magnified and given its deserved place of authority in the hearts and minds of men. The preacher who tries to accomplish this with a knowledge that is inadequate will find the task very difficult and the results far from commendable. When the blind lead the blind they, both fall into the ditch. But when the members of a congregation are fed upon a regular and steady diet of the word of God, they are bound to grow in the favor and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The gospel preacher will not have time to be wasted on themes other than those that come from the word of God and which have a direct bearing on the salvation of those to whom he is speaking. And let him never fear that Bible preaching will become uninteresting. The Bible is the most interesting book in all the world. It strikes a responsive chord in the hearts of all people everywhere, rich and poor alike. Its teachings strike down deep into the roots of human nature. Its messages are declared in simple straightforward language that is destined to carry conviction to the human heart. The preacher who stays with his Bible, who lives with it day and night, and who brings his messages straight from its pages, will always have something interesting, vital and worthwhile for those who listen to him.

Effectiveness in preaching will depend also on one's style. When one talks about style he is likely to be misunderstood. People sometimes think of style as something ornamental and superfluous which is added to the sermon. In reality, style is simply the manner or mode in which one expresses himself. Style has various qualities too complex to be discussed here, but it will be profitable

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to mention briefly two qualities of style that carry special weight in making preaching effective. These values are clarity and force. By clarity is meant the ability to express oneself in such a way that the meaning is not obscured or ambiguous and not easily misconstrued. This is a task that is made difficult by the nature of the average audience which is made up of all ages and levels of maturity and intellect and represents all the varying degrees of spirituality. The individual members of most any congregation differ widely in educational backgrounds. Their occupations vary from servants to executives; their wealth, from the widow's mite to the millionaire's gold. Some of them think seriously and diligently; others think only under extreme provocation. Some of them read widely and keep themselves informed upon all topics of current interest as well as historical and literary subjects of others scarcely read the newspaper and depend for their information on the ordinary chit-chat of everyday conversation. Such a heterogeneous group presents a great difficulty to the minister in trying to bring a message that will be equally clear to all. Believing that "sublime speech amuses a few and benefits fewer still," the wise preacher will take care that his language is characterized by simple diction and plain phraseology.

There is hardly any element that has as much to do with effectiveness of preaching as the personality of the preacher. God did not see fit to employ the ministry of angels but of men in carrying the saving message to those who are No The gospel has been committed into earthen vessels: God himself has ordained that preaching should be by men to men, by men of like sympathies and passions to others who possess these common characteristics. Everything that goes into the make-up of the man, his appearance, his voice his energy, his knowledge, his sympathy, all of these things either add to or detract from the message which he is conveying to the audience. It is not only the sermon but the whole man that must be prepared in order that effective preaching be done. The *sermon* may be prepared between Sundays, but the preparation of the man is not something that can be accomplished in a week. A highly desirable Christian personality is not the product of rapid growth but of painstaking care and cultivation over a long period of time, and Mis process of character integration must continue of just as long as life lasts. Being a herald of God is the high task to which a minister is committed, and he should strive

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to match the greatness of his calling with a character of sterling purity.

On Paul's second mission journey he carried the gospel for the first time onto the continent of Europe. Among the cities that he visited on the European continent was Thessalonica where he succeeded in establishing a congregation of Christians. After leaving Thessalonica Paul went down to Berea and Athens and then arrived in Corinth. He spent a year and six months in the city of Corinth establishing a church of our Lord there. During that time he wrote a short letter back to the Christians at Thessalonica. In the beginning of this letter Paul called their attention to the fact that "ye know what manner of men we showed ourselves toward you for your sake." Paul conducted himself in such a way that he was glad that the brethren at Thessalonica could become imitators of him. "Ye are witnesses," he said, "And God also, how holily and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe." Paul was the first Christian that these people had even seen. It had been his task, therefore, to show them by his own character and conduct, how a Christian ought to live. If Christianity had not produced in him a desirable quality of personal life there would have been nothing about him sufficiently attractive to have won those Thessalonians to the way of the Lord.

The gospel is mediated through lives as well as through messages. Works as well as words have a voice in what the preacher accomplishes. Paul's consecrated manner of life and gracious way of dealing with people were very largely responsible for his success wherever he went. He said further of his work in Thessalonica, "Ye know how we dealt with each one of you as a father with his own children, exhorting you and encouraging you, and testifying to the end that ye should walk worthily with God who calleth you into his own kingdom and glory." Such gracious characteristic of personal conduct together with the glorious story of the cross which he preached accounted for Paul's effectual power in winning the souls of these people to the Lord. "We were gentle in the midst of you as when a nurse cherisheth her own children, even so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because you were become very dear to us:" Paul's manner of life and his attitude toward his hearers was such as to inspire confidence. He was sincerely and earnestly concerned

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for their souls, and he yearned to bring them to Christ. "I seek not yours but you," he said to the Corinthians, and again, "I am willing to spend and be spent for your souls." Such a glorious Christian personality as Paul's indeed merits being remembered and imitated for it is the most valuable equipment that one can possess for the effectual preaching of the gospel of Christ.

Paul said to the Philippians, "For with me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21). For Paul to live was for Christ to live; for Paul to preach was for Christ to preach. Ever), gospel preacher should realize that there rests upon him the responsibility of standing in Christ's stead and pointing the way of righteousness to the lost who are around him. To do this means that he will seek to combine within himself the sum of all those desirable and wholesome personality qualities that found such abundant expression in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Unfortunately, many have conceived of personality as something more or less fixed at birth and about which nothing particularly can be done. Nothing, however, is farther from the truth. Personality is something that is flexible, capable of growth and of improvement. Hence the better one would become, the more he disclaims having arrived at his ultimate goal. "I count not myself yet to have apprehended, but I press on . . . of is the attitude of the greatest of men. Personality can be improved through study and discipline. Personality is something that is acquired as well as something with which we are born. Consequently, it can be altered and shaped in the direction in which we want it to grow. Undesirable qualities can be eliminated and desirable traits can be put in their stead. These changes are not made simply by idle wishing but by careful planning given to self-improvement and the willingness and perseverance to stick to it), the task. Even undesirable traits that cannot very well be changed may, be obscured by a host of very desirable traits that are magnified. Abraham Lincoln was not a man of enviable physique, but he possessed other qualities that made him winsome as a speaker. There is some indication that Paul himself was not a man of handsome physical appearance, but there was something so compelling about his personality as a whole that despite any physical handicap which might have encumbered him, his intellectual and spiritual magnetism overcame any such hindrance.

Improvement in personality may be made first of all by the elimination of those characteristics and mannerisms that are undesir-



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able in anyone. There is no place for self-conceit in any Christian, much less in the make-up of the gospel preacher. Yet the young preacher, and sometimes the older one, too, needs to guard himself against the growth of a tendency in this direction. Sometimes a young man hardly more than a novice, possessed of a ready flow of language and a handsome personal appearance, makes first impressions that are altogether out of proportion to his true value. After some of his early efforts he is likely to be assured that already he has achieved a success that is as good as the best. If he delivers a sermon which has an unusual appeal to some one or two persons, the young preacher may be so highly complimented that he begins to compare himself quite favorably with the more able and aged. In his own mind he may feel that already he is possessed of unusual homiletical abilities and that he therefore has just about exhausted all possibility for improvement. Foolish and pitiful indeed is the person who allows himself to fall into this attitude of mind. He needs to be reminded that even the average person of mediocre talent should be able to produce half a dozen extraordinary sermons. Time is the testing of a preacher's power. 'fears of fruition and consecrated labor, hundreds of convincing and appealing sermons, occasion upon occasion of trying situations which have proved the gentility of his disposition and the wholesomeness of his attitudes and convictions: these are the things which confirm a preacher's greatness. Every servant of God should be vitally aware that humility is one of the greatest Christian virtues. The humble and contrite spirit is of great price in the sight of God, and there is no room in God's ministry, or in His kingdom, either, for the self-satisfied and proud.

If a preacher possesses unusual talent, if his voice is superior to the average, and if he finds himself by inheritance more intellectually capable than his brother, he should be humbly grateful that he is endowed with those qualities that will enable him to become a greater servant and to render a greater service in the kingdom of the Lord. There is no place for conceit or arrogance: since more has been given more will be required. God will hold him to stricter account in the judgment for the superior qualities and abilities which he has possessed. God is going to expect greater results from the five-talent man than from the two-talent man. No one has a right to be puffed up over that with which nature has endowed him. It is no achievement of his own. Some

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times superior talent causes an individual to be puffed up and to find delight in displaying his superior wit; he seems to get a great deal of satisfaction from being known among his brethren as a person of remarkable cleverness. This man needs to give heed to a statement made by an aged and experienced preacher in a lecture to a group of young men who were preparing themselves to preach, "You can never convince your hearers that you are clever and that Christ is wonderful all at the same time." In washing the feet of His disciples, Jesus the Lord and Master, made himself the servant; and in this act reached the summit of an absolute and wonderful spirit of humility. Since the perfect and sinless Christ is humble, how can even the best of men consider themselves good enough to be proud"

The preaching of John the Baptist was very effective in turning many of the people of Israel from their sins unto the Lord. Many repented and were baptized by him. A committee of Jews was sent out to find out who he was and of John the Baptist had the humility and the grace to reply, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. make straight the way of the Lord...in the midst of you standeth one whom ye know not, even he that cometh after me, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose." When the ministry of John was compared with that of Jesus, John said, "He must increase but I must decrease." Notwithstanding these humble estimates of himself, John was paid this wonderful tribute from the lips of Jesus, "Of all them that have been born of women, not one has risen who is greater than John." The gospel preacher must never think of himself more highly than he ought to think but must condescend to things that are lowly.

.Another quality that defeats the power of some personalities is an oversensitiveness which results in irritability and peevishness. A lawyer is used to having his point of view contradicted by his opponent: in the schoolroom, the teacher is often challenged by the point of view of his pupils; the preacher, however, is used to speaking without being openly opposed. As a result some preachers become sensitive to criticism and feel insulted if anyone questions the correctness of their points of view or the accuracy of their comments. Remember, Jesus was often challenged, but he never showed himself perturbed; he maintained perfect control in the midst of the most difficult problems and the most trying circumstances of life. He was never irritable or pouty; he manifested a

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calmness of spirit and disposition that excited wonder and awe even in the minds of his enemies. When he was reviled he reviled not again.

Guard yourself against discouragements. The master never allowed himself to become discouraged even though he faced situations that were unusually difficult. On the occasion following the feeding of the five thousand, the multitudes left him; and only his twelve disciples remained. It must have been a discouraging outlook. It must have been disheartening, too, when his closest disciples went to sleep at Gethsemane. "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" he said unto them. But Jesus knew that he was doing the Father's will and he allowed none of these things to discourage him. It was a dark pagan world saturated with greed and lust into which Paul projected himself in the city of Corinth. To the average person the difficulties might have seemed unsurmountable. Paul, however, did not become discouraged. In a year and six months he had planted a church of the Lord Jews What in that pagan city. Sometimes one feels that his own powers are incompetent to grapple with the difficult situations around him. There are so few on the cause of right and so many on the side of wrong that one wonders what his own puny efforts can do in the face of such terrible opposition. What can one little life do in the kind of world that this one is? Remember Elijah, take heart, and go on. God is always on the side of right and he will not forget those who labor in his cause.

If the preacher would improve, he must study himself, must weed out the undesirable traits and supply in their stead the Christian graces. The preacher who makes his life a fit instrument for the effective work of teaching and preaching the religion of Jesus Christ is the one who is deeply devoted and consecrated and who leads joyously, but seriously a life which is in harmony with the ideals and teachings of the master. To preach Christ effectively one must be like Christ. He who shows the way to others must himself be walking in that way—with his companion, Jesus!

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After every effort has been expended to make the sermon as effective as possible, how is the preacher to determine whether or not he has succeeded? How is the sermon to be measured or judged of First. it must be preached arid then the results observed:

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for the sermon is not an end in itself but a tool. Tools are not made for the purpose of being admired but for the purpose of being used in the construction (of something else. The sermon is not something simply to be admired and complimented as a work of art but is an instrument for the rehabilitation of human character. In other words, the sermon is not an end in itself, but a means to another end. Before one can determine the effectiveness of his sermon he must have in mind a well designed purpose or goal. The sermons are simply the tools that one uses as a means of arriving at one's goal. What changes are taking place in the lives of those who are listening to the preaching? Whatever these changes are, they show the effectiveness of the preaching.

When God gathers before him all the nations in the day of judgment and separates them as a shepherd separates his sheep from his goats, will the preacher have so influenced those who were subject to his ministry that they will be placed on the right hand and go away into eternal life? If so, he will have been successful; if not, he will have failed. These things indicate that the test or the measure of the sermon is not to be found just within the sermon itself but in those persons who have INTENDED to its delivery. If no change has taken place, no effective preaching has been done. If the preacher found people evil and left them evil, no merit can be credited to his work. On the other hand, if he found them dishonest and transformed them into honest men, if he found them penurious and inspired them to be liberal, if he found aliens and strangers to the commonwealth of Israel and caused them to become fellow citizens with the saints, then his preaching has been effective.

The chief concern of the carpenter is not his tools but the finished building. He keeps his tools sharp and clean in order that they may aid him in constructing the finished product. In the same manner the main concern of the preacher is not the sermon itself but those persons who listen to it, just what changes need to be brought about in these particular people is the question that the preacher is to ask himself before each preaching occasion.

The ultimate goal of all gospel preaching is the development of the godlike personality. "Ye therefore shall be perfect even as your father in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). God is a God of righteousness and he wants his people to be like Him. "Ye shall be holy because I am holy, saith the Lord." He wants his people

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to be sincere, compassionate, loving, and obedient. All the qualities that go to make up his perfect character he wants to see in the lives of those who are his children. He has shown himself to us through Christ and He asks that we follow Him. "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:5). "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). "Which of you convicteth me of unrighteousness" (John 8:46). That Jesus was a righteous man, was the testimony even of the Roman centurion who watched his crucifixion. The preacher of the gospel must deliver sermons which will make human nature more divine; human beings more godly; human life more Christlike. To the extent that he succeeds in this, his sermons are truly effective.

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Other things might be written about the art of preaching not contained within these pages. Principles of interpretation and exegesis, of textual, expository, and topical sermon building, of argumentation and reasoning; all these things have a place in the art of preaching. But these are written that those who read may be motivated to become more effective preachers of the glorious gospel of our blessed Savior. Those who consecrate themselves to this noble task have the promise of fruitful results. "As the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven and returneth not thither but watereth the earth and maketh it to bring forth and bud . . . so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

## PART II

*"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen." I Pet. 5:11.*

*"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed."—II Jno. 10.*

# PREACHING IN THE RESTORATION — A HISTORICAL REVIEW

By  
**C. A. NORRED**

REVOLUTION *By* PREACHING

THE PATTERN OF THE PREACHING OF THE RESTORATION

GRADUAL GROWTH *OF* THE PATTERN

1. *The Work of Barton Warren Stone*
2. *The Work of the Campbells*
3. *The Work of Walter Scott*
4. *Separation from the Baptists;  
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THE CAMPBELLS AND THE WORK OF STONE

DID THE PREACHERS OF THE RESTORATION PREACH A "FULL  
GOSPEL"?

## PREACHING IN THE RESTORATION—A HISTORICAL REVIEW

### REVOLUTION BY PREACHING

The pioneers in the work of restoring "the ancient and apostolic order of things" accomplished one of the greatest revolutions in all religious history. And they accomplished their work through their preaching. This makes their preaching worthy of careful analysis and study. Certainly we are not to allow ourselves to look upon those early labors as inspired examples. The success which crowned their labors shows, however, that their work embodied many correct principles and methods. It is to a survey of the labor of the pioneers that the reader is now invited.

### THE PATTERN OF THE PREACHING OF THE RESTORATION

It is strikingly noticeable that the preaching of the pioneers followed a distinct pattern. This pattern was shaped by the very needs that called forth the labor in question. In the very nature of things, then, we must fix in mind the conditions which confronted the pioneers. As we begin this study we shall observe, first, the intense denominationalism of that time. It is indeed difficult for us to picture today the type and degree of the sectarianism which then existed. The denominationalism which we face today has softened considerably, for it has undergone a hundred years of pummeling at the hands of gospel preachers. Quite generally now there is a certain spirit of fraternalism between the sects. Then, though, sectarianism existed in unmodified hardness and bitterness. And such a condition had come about by altogether natural processes. First, there had come the Reformation, which not only embodied bitterness in its progress but left a flaming antagonism between the old order of Catholicism and the new order of Protestantism. Then as Protestantism broke up into numberless sects, these sects not only inherited the evil spirit of the original antagonism but found each increasing division the occasion for even greater bitterness. The result was that within something like two hundred years after the Reformation the whole body of the



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religious public had become very largely a group of belligerent sects between which there existed the fiercest and most unrelenting antagonism. In speaking of this deplorable condition Professor George Herbert Betts declares: "Dogmatism flourished, authority thundered, councils issued decrees, the rack vied with fire in defending be 'true faith' against heresy and error. The conflict absorbed the thought and interest of the leaders, and the masses made religion primarily a matter of adherence to dogmatic statement of belief set forth by, councils and assemblies. Heresy was the supreme in, and salvation was made to depend on be turn of a phrase. The great desideratum was therefore to have the people taught the central truth in authoritative form; that is, as interpreted by the theologians, who for the Protestant Church were no less intolerant than the priestly hierarchy was for the Catholic Church."

Something of the exact sectarianism which the pioneers met may be imagined from the reading of the following copy of a letter circulated by the Franklin Baptist Association of Kentucky:

DEAR BRETHREN:—You will learn from our minutes the (action) of our Association. Before Alexander Campbell visited Kentucky, you were in harmony and peace; you heard but the one gospel, and knew only one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. Your church Constitutions were regarded, and their principles expounded and enforced by those who occupied your pulpits. Thus you were respected by other denominations as a religious community. Often were you favored with refreshing seasons from on high, and many of your neighbors and your families were brought to a knowledge of the truth. How delightful were your morning and your evening interviews, cheered by the songs and prayers and exhortations of brethren, and by the presence of Him who has promised that where two or three are gathered together in His name, to be in the midst! Have not those happy days gone by? In place of preaching, you now hear your church covenants ridiculed; your faith, as registered upon your church books, is denounced, and you yourselves are traduced, while the more heedless and unstable abjure the faith, and join with the wicked in scenes of strife, schism, and tumult. The fell spirit of discord stalks, in open day, through families, neighborhoods and churches. If you would protect yourselves as churches, make no compromise with error—mark them who cause divisions, and divest yourself of the last vestige of *Campbellism*.

As an Association, we shall esteem it our duty to drop correspondence with any and every association or church where this heresy is tolerated. Those who say they are not *Campbellites*, and yet countenance and circulate his little pamphlets, are insincere—they are to be avoided. When they say they are persecuted because "they will not swallow the Philadelphia Confession of Faith" you are not to believe it, for no church has called one of

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them in question on that point, so far as we know. It is not so much their objection to this book as our objections to their Confession of Faith that makes the difference.' This was the spirit of division our pioneer brethren encountered!

The obvious sectarianism just pointed out was naturally the first thing to be attacked by the pioneers. But as they progressed in their work they increasingly discerned that the division so manifest was in reality merely the outgrowth of the various creeds. Indeed it was observed that persons of the various beliefs apparently felt themselves more bound by their creeds than by Christ and his truth. As the pioneers found themselves faced by this evil they began to give increasing emphasis to the authority of the New Testament. Thus began to appear the definite pattern of preaching. First, there was the emphasis on the truth of "the one body" as contrasted with the numerous sects and schisms. Then there arose, as a second factor, the increasing emphasis on the authority of the New Testament Scriptures as contrasted with "the doctrines and commandments of men.

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### *1. The Work of Barton Warren Stone.*

The first person who comes prominently forward in the unfolding of the pattern of preaching as discerned in the preaching of the pioneers is Barton Warren Stone. When Stone first comes to our attention he is serving as pastor for the churches of Concord and Cane Ridge, Presbyterian congregations near the present site of Paris, Kentucky. This was in 1796. At that time the reaction against religious division was beginning to make itself felt over a rather wide area. In 1793 a group of Methodists at Manikin Town, S. C., seceded from their denomination to call themselves merely Christians. Then in 1800 Dr. Abner Jones, of Hartland, Vermont, led a similar movement among the Baptists in his section. It is not at all surprising, therefore, to find Stone leading another such undertaking.

It appears that Stone's beginning steps in this matter were precipitated by his reflections on the matter of predestination. The people with whom Mr. Stone was associated held to the Calvinistic theory of unconditional election and reprobation. According to

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<sup>1</sup>Life of Elder John Smith (Williams), pp. 282, 283.

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this theory, God, before all time, chose certain persons to salvation and left all others to condemnation. And this choice was made, so it was held, without any divine consideration of good works on the part of those chosen, and was based solely on the sovereignty of God. Under the influence of the increased religious interest of his day Stone eventually repudiated this notion and began to preach that all who would believe the Scriptures and obey the Lord could be saved.

Stone became greatly concerned about the divisions he observed in the religious world. The outcome was that he and some of those associated with him issued the now famous document which they termed The Last Will and Testament of The Springfield Presbytery. It should be said in this connection that some time after Mr. Stone began to form his reformatory views, he and five other members of his Presbytery withdrew and formed their own Presbytery, known as The Springfield Presbytery. After about a year, however, they began to understand that their presbytery smacked of the denominational spirit and decided to dissolve it. In a somewhat humorous vein they prepared what they called The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbyter).. To the document was appended what was called The Witnesses' Address. Because of the historical value of the documents they are here reproduced:

### THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF THE SPRINGFIELD PRESBYTERY

For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all, while the testator liveth. Thou fool. that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. Whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, yet once I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, yet once more, signifies the removing of those things shaken as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.— Scripture.

THE PRESBYTERY OF SPRINGFIELD, sitting at Caneridge, in the County of Bourbon, being through a gracious Providence in more than all ordinary bodily health, growing in strength and size daily; and in perfect soundness and composure of mind; but knowing that it is appointed for all delegated bodies once to die; and considering that the life of every such body is very uncertain, do make, and ordain this our Last Will and Testament in manner and form following. viz:

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Imprimis. We will, that this body die, be dissolved, and sink into union with the Body of Christ at large; for there is but one body and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling.

*Item.* We will, that our name of distinction, with its *Reverend* title, be forgotten, that there be but one Lord over God's heritage, and his name one.

*Item.* We will, that our power of making laws for the government of the church, and executing them by delegated authority forever cease; that the people may have free course to the Bible, and adopt the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

*Item.* We will, that the candidates for the Gospel ministry henceforth study the Holy Scriptures with fervent prayer, and obtain license from God to preach the simple Gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. without any mixture of philosophy, vain deceit, traditions of men, or the rudiments of the world, and let none henceforth take this honor upon himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

*Item.* We will, that the church of Christ resume her native right of internal government try her candidates for the ministry, as, to their soundness in the faith, acquaintance with experimental religion, gravity and aptness to teach; and admit no other proof of their authority but Christ speaking in them We will, that the church of Christ look up to the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborours into his harvest; and that she resume her primitive right of trying those who say they are apostles, and are not.

*Item.* We will, that each particular church, as a body, actuated by the same spirit, choose her own preacher, and support him by a free will offering. without a written call or subscription—admit members—remove offenses; and never henceforth delegate her right of government to any man or set of men whatever.

*Item.* We will, that the people henceforth take the Bible as the only guide to heaven; and as many as are offended with other books, which in competition with it, may cast them into the fire if they choose; for it is better to enter into life having one book, than having many to be cast into hell.

*Item.* We will, that preachers and people, cultivate a spirit of mutual forbearance; pray more, and dispute less; and while they behold the signs of the times, look up, and confidently expect that redemption draweth nigh

*Item.* We will, that our weak brethren, who have been wishing to make the Presbytery their king, and wot not what is now become of it, betake themselves to the Rock of Ages and follow Jesus for the future.

*Item.* We will, that the Synod of Kentucky examine every member, who may be *suspected* of having departed from the Confession of Faith, and .suspend every suspected heretic immediately; in order that the oppressed may go free, and taste the sweets of Gospel liberty.

*Item.* We will, that Ja — , the author of two letters lately published in Lexington, be. encouraged in his zeal to destroy *partyism*. We will, moreover, that our past conduct may be examined into by all who may have correct

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information; but let foreigners beware of speaking evil of things which they know not.

*Item.* Finally we will, that all our sister bodies read their Bibles carefully, that they may see their fate there determined, and prepare for death before it is too late.

### SPRINGFIELD PRESBYTERY

June 28th, 1804

L. S.

John Dunlavy,  
Richard M'Nemar,  
B. W. Stone,     *Witnesses*  
John Thompson,  
David Purviance,  
Robert Marshall,

### THE WITNESSES' ADDRESS

We, the above named witnesses of the Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery, knowing that there will be many conjectures respecting the causes which have occasioned the dissolution of that body, think proper to testify, that from its first existence it was knit together in love, lived in peace and concord, and died a voluntary and happy death.

Their reasons for dissolving that body were the following: With deep concern they viewed the divisions, and party spirit among professed Christians, principally owing to the adoption of human creeds and human forms of government. While they were united under the name of a Presbytery, they endeavored to cultivate a spirit of love and unity with all Christians; but found it extremely difficult to suppress the idea that they themselves were a party separate from others. This difficulty increased in proportion to their success in the ministry. jealousies were excited in the minds of other denominations; and a temptation was laid before those who were connected with other parties, to view them in the same light. At their last meeting they undertook to prepare for the press a piece entitled Observations on Church Government, in which the world will see the beautiful simplicity of Christian Church government, stripped of human inventions and lordly traditions. As they proceeded in the investigation of that subject, they soon found there was neither precept nor example in the New Testament for such confederacies as modern Church Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, General Assemblies, etc. Hence they concluded that while they continued in the connection in which they stood, they were off the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, of which Christ himself is the chief corner stone. However just, therefore, their views of church government might have been, they would have gone out under the name and sanction of a self-constituted body.

Therefore, from a principle of love for Christians of every name, the precious cause of Jesus, and dying sinners who are kept from the Lord by the existence of sects and parties in the church, they have cheerfully consented to retire from the din and fury of conflicting parties.—sink out of the view of fleshly minds, and die the death. They believe their death will be the great gain to the world. But though dead, as above, and stripped

## GRADUAL GROWTH OF THE PATTERN

from their mortal frame, which only served to keep them too near the confines of Egyptian bondage, they yet live and speak in the land of Gospel liberty; they blow the trumpet of jubilee, and willingly devote themselves to the help of the Lord against the mighty. They will aid the brethren, by their counsel, when required; assist in ordaining elders, or pastors—seek the divine blessing—unite with all Christians—commune together, and strengthen each others' hands in the work of the Lord.

We design by the grace of God, to continue in the exercise of those functions, which belong to us as ministers of the gospel, confidently trusting in the Lord, that he will be with us. We candidly acknowledge, that in some things we may err, through human infirmity; but he will correct our wanderings, and preserve his church. Let all Christians join with us, in crying to God day and night, to remove the obstacles which stand in the way of his work, and give him no rest until he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. We heartily unite with our Christian brethren of every name, in thanksgiving to God for the display of his goodness in the glorious work he is carrying on in our Western country, which we hope will terminate in the universal spread of the gospel, and the unity of the church.<sup>2</sup>

Any person well taught in the things of the Lord can discern the outcroppings of many erroneous views in the foregoing document. It does show the direction of the wind, however, and discloses Stone's emphasis on the idea of union and agreement. Furthermore, it points to the increasing idea of the authority of the divine word. It is justly considered a truly historic document.

These steps of Stone as just described constituted a truly revolutionary development. And in pressing his work, Stone came near to an even more revolutionary step than any of those recited. As was common in all quarters in those days, Stone employed the "11 mourners' bench" and engaged in the practice of praying for the abstract and instantaneous salvation of those who came forward for prayer. On a certain occasion he was engaged in a meeting in Millersburg, Missouri. Brother Samuel Rogers, who attended these meetings, makes the following interesting report:

The interest was very great and the audiences very large. Many had professed, and many more, who were at the mourner's bench, refused to be comforted. After laboring with the mourners until a late hour of the night without being able to comfort them, Brother Stone arose and addressed the audience: 'Brethren, something must be wrong; we have been laboring with these mourners earnestly, and they are deeply penitent; why have they not found relief? We all know that God is willing to pardon them, and certainly they are anxious to receive it. The cause must be that we do not preach as the Apostles did. On the day of Pentecost, those who were pierced to the heart" were promptly told what to do for the remission of

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<sup>2</sup>Pioneer Sermons (Rowe—1908), pp. 8-10.

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sins. And they gladly received the Word, and were baptized; and the same day about three thousand were added to them.' He then quoted the great commission: 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.'

When Brother Stone sat down we were all completely confounded; and, for my part, though I said nothing, I thought our dear old brother was beside himself. The speech was a perfect damper upon the meeting; the people knew not what to make of it. On a few other occasions, Brother Stone repeated about the same language, with the same effect. At length he concluded that the people were by no means prepared for this doctrine, and gave it up.<sup>3</sup>

The persons friendly to Stone's plea insisted on being referred to as simply Christians. The churches were sometimes referred to as Christian Churches and sometimes as Churches of Christ. It is a point to say that on the occasion of the death of Mr. Stone, the church at Cane Ridge addressed to the bereaved family a letter in which it referred to itself as the "Church of Christ at Cane Ridge." It should be said that the "Christians" attained considerable strength. And it is gratifying to know that in the later growth of the truth in the work of restoring the New Testament order Stone and those associated with him went along with the truth. This culmination came about in 1832, when leaders of the work of Stone met in Lexington, Kentucky, with leaders in the work with the Campbells and achieved an agreement that all would work together for the restoration of the New Testament order. Since Stone's work began to come into sight in 1804, his distinctive labors ran over a period of about thirty years. His principal field of labor was Kentucky.

The following complete address by Stone is here inserted to show his thinking in the mature conclusions he had reached.

### TO THE CHURCH SCATTERED THROUGHOUT AMERICA By BARTON WARREN STONE

(This address is taken from "Pioneer Sermons." It appeared about 1830.)

*My dear Brethren:*

Your edification in Christ Jesus, your fellowship in the Spirit, your union with all saints, and your prosperity in the Lord, have

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<sup>3</sup>Autobiography of Elder Samuel Rogers. (In this I used a rare old book, the only copy I have ever found, and now in possession of H. E. Rutherford, 4502 Kansas Street, San Diego, California.) (I have found that the reference is pp. 55, 56.)

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long been the wish and prayer of my head, and labor of my life. in the prosecution of these divine objects, I see, on a retrospect. my many imperfections; I blush at the remembrance, and pray my Lord, and beseech my brethren to forgive. Knowing that the time of my departure is near, I wish to write a few things to you, which may be Profitable. after my decease, and which may speak when I am dead.

About the beginning of this century, my mind was uncommonly exercised on the subject of religion. I then evidently saw what I yet see, that Me sects in which the religious community was divided, were antisciptural, and insuperable mountains in the way of the progress of truth. With others in the same spirit, I set myself against this evil, and determined before God to exert my feeble powers to remove it from the religion of heaven, and promote Christian union, both by my example and by my endeavors in the cause of truth. The odds were fearful, a handful against the formidable array of long-established parties. In Israel's God we trusted, and "*Forward*" was our motto. Beyond our most sanguine expectations the cause of union prospered. One thing astounded us: the clergy of all the sects, who should be foremost in every good work, were our bitterest opposers. We had to combat for every inch of ground we possessed, and for every fortress we gained.

In this mind have I continued to this day; and yet feel the same spirit to labor in the good cause, but the flesh is too weak to sustain the burden, after a warfare of nearly half a century.

'My dear brethren, we have advanced and become a great people. Now is the time of danger, now there is need of humility, watchfulness and prayer. We begin to be respected as a people, and begin already to vie with others in numbers. A Joab is sent by the higher powers through the length and breadth of the land to number Israel. O that the fate of Israel of old may not be ours! If it proceeds from pride, and if God has regard for us, we may expect a diminution in our ranks. Instead of thanksgiving and praise to God, because he has so wonderfully prospered our labors in uniting so many thousands, it is to be feared that pride may yet succeed, and spoil all our works. Israel were often seduced from the true worship of God to the idolatry and communion of the nation among whom they dwelt, and this always took place in the days of their prosperity. So we may be so captivated by the



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doctrines, forms, popularity, and respectability of the sects around us that we may try to accommodate the truth of God to their prejudices, in order to gain their favor, and eventually to enlist them on our side, and join in our mighty union. Such notion is no better, if as good, as that of the Romanists, who are exceedingly zealous for union. A union of ten pious, uncompromising persons in the truth, is better than ten thousand of the contrary character. Truth must never be sacrificed for the union of numbers. Truth preached and lived in the spirit will cut its way through all opposition.

But what is truth? The Bible, and the Bible alone-not opinions which men have formed of the Bible, whether comprised in a confession of faith, or in a Christian system, or in thirty-nine articles, or in a discipline. Our union was first commenced on this ground, and sectarianism first received its deadly wound from this weapon, and by no other will it die the death, if its death is to be effected by moral means. If we begin to magnify our opinions, and make them tests of fellowship, we depart from the foundation laid in Zion, and shall be under the necessity of becoming a sect by forming a book of opinions as our creed, and demanding subscription to it as the basis of union. This must be a progressive work; it can not be effected at once. There is too much light in the world at present for-its growth. "Here a little and there a little," must precede its introduction. My dear brethren, watch and pray, lest you fall into temptation and mar the work of God. Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage.

On this foundation I have been immovably fixed for many years, and shall remain for the few days I may yet live. Some of my own brethren may think I do not advocate Christianity. It may be so; for I confess myself a fallible creature, and therefore I warn my brethren not to receive anything I have said or written as truth, unless sustained by the infallible Word. They who think I am not advocating Christianity may be wrong, for they also are fallible, and must not be trusted without careful examination by the Word.

I well remember that when my mind was opened at first to see the truth as stated above, I said that if all the world should depart from it, I never would. When all my fellow-laborers had departed from it, and left me alone, I still felt and repeated the same words, and still repeat them.

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A factionist I never can nor will be. Should I stand in the way of the present reformation in the opinion of any, it will not be long. Let them publicly withdraw from me their fellowship. To cast me out of the Church they can not, without they cast out all those who receive the Bible alone, and who are antisectarians. The sects have their churches, like the States of Greece, closely concatenated, though sometimes the chain is broken. Are we beginning to imitate them? Do we begin to yield the power and right of the churches to the clergy? It may be a harmless thing in the present generation; but posterity may writhe under the galling chain. What means so much written on organization? the first link is loose--unfastened--and that link is love. Without this the churches may be chained together by human device; but this is not the organization of the head of the Church. We may devise plans of organization, but they will all prove fallacious. Human bonds may bind human beings, who have not the spirit; but spiritual bonds can not bind together such persons.

The great secret of church government and organization has been almost overlooked. It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in each believer and member of the Church. "The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, fidelity, temperance; against such there is no law." No law, of heaven or of earth will condemn them. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," the Spirit which dwells in them. Such a church is composed of such members, is easily governed by the law of Christ, and they need no other. But those of the opposite character, who have not the Spirit, and who walk after the flesh, are not subject to this law, nor indeed can be. "The works of the flesh are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, Revel lings, and such like"--and such shall not inherit the kingdom of God. We greatly lack the Spirit; where that abides there is order and good government. Where that is not, there is confusion, and every evil work; there is theory for better organization--for a more perfect system of church government. The simple rules given by Christ will not answer the purpose to govern the carnal and worldly professors of religion. Let us be filled with the Spirit and walk in the Spirit, and the simple government of Christ will be all sufficient.

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Should it be enquired, what is that government for the church, ordained by Jesus Christ? that shall be the subject of some future number.

### THE CHURCH

The first Church of Christ established on earth after his resurrection is found in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, which church was composed of one hundred and twenty members only. "The number of the names together were about a hundred and twenty." These names were those of the eleven apostles. "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." Among them were Barsabas, or Barnabas, and Matthias, who was afterward chosen an apostle to fill the place of Judas Iscariot. Of all this number we find not one infant, and what is said of this church excludes the idea of an infant being a member of it. For it is said, "These all continued with one accord, in prayer and supplication." Infants can not feel that accord, nor engage in prayer and supplication, all knowledge. Besides, this church of one hundred and twenty chose an apostle by casting votes or lots. This could not be the work of infants. Again, "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." It may be said, that those filled with the Holy Ghost were the apostles alone. But the Scripture says, "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost"; and this was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And on my servants and on my hand maidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." If infants had been of this number, and prophesied with the men and women, the miracle would have been more extraordinary and convincing than that which appeared among the adults. But no mention is made of it, and no one contends or believes that it was a fact.

The result of Peter's preaching on that occasion was glorious. "Many were pierced to the heart, and cried out, what shall we do?" Infants did not thus act. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized (no infants yet) and the same day there added unto them about three thousand souls; and they continued steadfastly

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in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and of prayers."

We see no place for infants yet, for such worship can not be performed by them. Could it be proved that infants were in this church, it would afford an irrefragable argument that they should eat the Lord's Supper, and thus would be settled the doubt of pedo-baptists. All that follows in Acts 2:42 to the end equally excludes the idea that infants were members of this church. The last sentence is incontrovertible. "And the Lord added to the church daily the saved." Acts 5:14, "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women."

In favor of infant church membership, it is argued, by Divine appointment they were members of the old church, by what authority were they excluded from that in the New Institution?

Answer: Suppose under the old constitution of Kentucky females were admitted to the same privileges in government as the men—they had equal right to vote at the polls, and to hold and exercise all the offices of the government as the males. In process of years the constitution was altered, and these rights were indirectly taken from the females. The qualifications of voters to fill the offices in government were, that every male of twenty-one years had a right to vote for officers in the government; and that every male over twenty-five years had a right to fill offices by the election of his compatriots. The women might argue, we once had the right to choose representatives in the government, and to be chosen as such. By what authority are we excluded from these privileges under the new constitution? It nowhere says that females shall no longer enjoy these privileges.

I grant, the constitution nowhere says in direct terms that, women are excluded from these privileges; but indirectly it does exclude them—for the qualifications for those privileges as stated in the constitution, are inapplicable to females. We may say that infants were allowed the privileges of church membership under the old institution; but in the new, they are indirectly excluded, not possessing the qualifications required to be in those who are admitted to be members of the church.

The whole Jewish nation were members of the old church, and pleaded before John the baptizer their right to all church privileges. John did not admit their plea to be valid. If the old and new churches are the same, how could the three thousand believing

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Jews be added to the church of Could they be added to that of which they had always been members? We think not.

A part of the inhabitants of Kentucky might still adhere to the old constitution, which admitted females to an equal share in government with the males; but they are evidently not recognized as citizens of the commonwealth, but as traitors in opposition to it. So the Jews, a part of the world, still adhere to their old constitution, which admits of infant church-membership. But they are not acknowledged citizens of Christ's Church, but aliens and traitors in opposition to it. So in part are to be viewed all those who adopt the old constitution of the Jew, or blend it with the new, without divine authority. This a subject of importance, and should be calmly considered, and not hastily passed over through prejudice or prepossession.

### UNITY

During the days of the apostles, the Christians lived in union and harmony among themselves; not altogether in a union of opinion, for this is unattainable, if desirable in the present imperfect state of man; but they lived in a union of spirit. They were of one heart and one soul

The union is portrayed by the pen of an inspired apostle, in Eph. 4:5, 6.

1st. He says there is one body under the direction of one head, one law-giver. They are one with the Father and the Son Jesus Christ. The present state of the church shows many bodies, many heads and many law-givers. Can they all be the Church of Christ? Impossible, if judged according to the Scriptures.

2nd. "There is one Spirit." This spirit dwells in the one body. "Ye are the temple of the Holy Spirit." This body is the habitation of God through the Spirit-the Spirit of God-the Spirit of Christ which dwelleth in them, the same Spirit by which God will quicken their mortal bodies, or raise them from the dead (Rom. 8). The fruits of the indwelling Spirit are love, joy, peace, etc. (Gal. 5). Every member of the body possesses this Spirit and bears the same fruits.

3rd. "They are all called to one hope:" This, the object of their hope, is set forth in the Gospel, as, glory, honor, immortality and eternal life, with all the blessings of Heaven, promised in the New Covenant.

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4th. "One Lord." Though there be lords many, with us there is but one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. He is Lord of all in Heaven and in earth. To his orders and command all Christians are obedient. To his government they all submit.

5th. "One faith." Though there be faiths many, yet with us there is but one faith, the faith of Jesus Christ, the faith once delivered to the saints, the faith which the apostles preached, and to which they urged obedience for salvation. The New Testament is one faith of Christians.

6th. "One baptism." This the baptism which the apostles were commissioned to administer to all believers, and is one part of obedience to the one faith, through which salvation is promised.

7th. "One God and Father of all." For there be gods many, with us "Christians" there is but one God, of whom were all things, etc.

Here is a confession of faith, one in which Christians once united according to the will of God. Every article of it is essential to our salvation. On this must the church settle again, before she becomes united, and before the world can be saved.

Can any Christians of any sect object to unite upon this Divine confession of faith? Do not all acknowledge there is but one body, of which Christ is the head? Do not all acknowledge that the Spirit of the Son dwells in the one body, and that each member drinks into this one Spirit, and bears the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, etc.? Do not all Christians have the same hope set before them—glory, honor, etc.? Do not all claim the same faith, the New Testament? True, they have and may have many opinions of many truths of this faith; yet if with these opinions, they show that they are members of the one body, and have the one Spirit, that they are inspired with the hope of immortality to be holy as God is holy, who will reject them? Let them have their opinions, seeing they do not influence the heart to evil practices. "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, without regard to diversity of opinions." To unite upon opinions is like building a house upon the sand—it will fall.

Do not Christians own the one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, sent to be the Savior of the world? Different opinions are

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formed and entertained with respect to his person; but do not all true Christians show their love of him by keeping his Commands? Do they not unreservedly trust in him, believing firmly that he is able to save them? Speculation and controversy on this point have done incalculable mischief in the Christian world.

Do not all profess the one God and Father of all? Surely there can be but one faith on this subject, however jarring may be the speculations of men.

Which of all these sects can say, we are in this union? I ask each, are you the body of Christ? Then you alone have the one Spirit. All the other bodies of the sects are not the body of Christ, and have not his Spirit dwelling in them, and therefore are none of his. If any one sect claims to be the body of Christ, they unchristianize all the other sects. Can all the sects collectively make the one body? Then all the sects have' the one Spirit dwelling in them, and consequently have the fruits of the Spirit-love, joy, peace, etc. Can it be possible then that they are all one, and yet divided into contending factions? Can they all have the one Spirit and bear the fruits of it, and yet instead of peace, love, joy, etc., bear the fruits of hatred, discord and strife? "*Judaeas appella credat, non ego!*"

These human-constituted bodies must be dissolved before they become the one body of Christ, and drink into the one Spirit. They must cast away their various faiths, and receive the one faith of Christ. They must relinquish their vain philosophy respecting the Father and the Son, and learn the truth from the great Teacher.

My brethren of the various denominations, hear the exhortation of an old man, now past the age allotted to mortals, who must soon quit the busy scenes of this life. You all see and the pious of every name deplore the miserable state of Christianity as now presented to view. It is high time to wake out of sleep, and no longer indulge in dreams of better days, while we are inactive to hasten them on. You need not conviction of the vanity of expecting a union of the sects as such; you must pronounce the idea chimerical and absurd. It must be effected on God's own plan, and it will be effected, or the prayer of Jesus remain unanswered. Some of you will say it will be effected in the millennium. No, it must be effected before, that the world may be brought to believe and be saved. When Christ shall come the second time, it will be to judge, not to save the world.

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While Protestants are wrangling and dividing, it is food to the Papists, who eagerly watch and wish for our destruction. By our conduct we are healing the deadly wound of the beast, who is pouring his vassals in thousands on our peaceful shores. They are decoying our citizens' children to their high schools and instilling into the tender minds their pernicious, anti-Christian doctrines. Many of the dignitaries of the established church of England are engaged to effect a union with the old mother. This is natural. Our divisions and strifes are fast paving the way for Papal despotism, for Papal rule, and for the Papal inquisition. Our divisions are, driving thousands to scepticism, and hardening the world of the ungodly to their utter ruin. Our divisions are drinking up the spirits of the godly, destroying the influence of Christianity, and barring the way to heaven.

This, my brethren, you will acknowledge; and yet, how—oh, how can you be inactive? How can you any longer labor to establish a party, and not summon all your powers to promote the union of Christians? "Self must be humbled, pride abased, else they destroy our souls." I feel that real Christians in every party are in the minority and the opposite character among them will, of course, oppose. But we must come out from among them, and be separate—leave all for the kingdom of heaven's sake.

You know, my brethren, this event must take place sooner or later, and the sooner the better. But you ask, "what shall we do? I daily pray for the union of Christians, and am waiting for God to effect it." Do you wait for God to work a miracle to convince you of a plain duty? Do you wait for him to force his people to do right? In vain you pray, in vain you wait, while you remain idle and inactive in the great work.<sup>4</sup>

### *2. The Work of the Campbells*

The second outstanding development in the gradual unfolding of the pattern of preaching in the work of the pioneers came in the work of Thomas Campbell and his son, Alexander.

Thomas Campbell came to America from Ireland in 1807 and settled in Washington, Pennsylvania. Prior to his coming to America he had labored as a minister in the Seceder group of the Presbyterians. And it should be observed that in that service he

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<sup>4</sup>Pioneer Sermons (Rowe—1908), pp. 149-162.



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had distinguished himself for his labors in the interest of unity Finding his health failing, however, he came to America in hope that the new country would be favorable to him. On his arrival in America he was duly received by his denomination and appointed to labors in the Presbytery of Chartiers in the western part of Pennsylvania.

When Campbell established his residence at Washington he naturally took up the routine of his labors. Eventually his labors took him to a certain community for the purpose of holding what was termed a communion service. As he was arranging the details of the service he came across several persons who belonged to a different group in his particular denomination. Observing that according to the rules generally followed these persons might never have the opportunity of a communion service, he admonished all to disregard the petty difference among them and participate in the communion together. Campbell's traveling companion, a Mr. Wilson, took offense at this action of Campbell and duly reported the denominational violation to the Presbytery. The result was that Campbell was officially censured for his action. Desiring to avoid the appearance of division, he submitted to the action of his Presbytery. After some time, though, he found that he could not carry on in the course which his denomination expected. Accordingly he formally withdrew from his Presbytery and denomination. This did not mean, however, the cessation of what he thought of as his labors in the gospel. Quite to the contrary, he went freely about the country preaching in homes, public buildings, friendly groves, and such other places as invited. And his labors were not unappreciated. His natural charm, his ability, and the fine spirit of his preaching attracted many persons to his services. It was not long, therefore, before he found himself somewhat the recognized leader of a considerable element in his community. And it must be said that this element was not marked by any denominational agreement. As a matter of fact, they represented different orders-and in some cases no denomination at all. After a time Campbell saw the need for an understanding among them and proposed that a meeting be held with a view to bringing about a more tangible arrangement among them. This meeting was eventually held at the home of Abram Alters, a man not identified with any particular denomination, and who resided, as history states, "between Mount Pleasant and Washington."

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In discussing this particular meeting, Dr. Robert Richardson, writer of "Memoirs of Alexander Campbell," has the following to say:

The time appointed having arrived, there was a very general assembling at the place designated. All seemed to feel the importance of the occasion and to realize the responsibilities of their position. A deep feeling of solemnity pervaded the assembly when Thomas Campbell, having opened the meeting in the usual manner, and, in earnest prayer, specially invoked the Divine guidance, proceeded to rehearse the matter from the beginning, and to dwell with unusual force upon the manifold evils resulting from the divisions in religious society—divisions which, he urged, were as unnecessary as they were injurious, since God had provided, in his sacred Word, an infallible standard, which was all-sufficient and alone-sufficient, as a basis of union and Christian co-operation. He showed, however, that men had not been satisfied with its teachings, but had gone outside of the Bible, to frame for themselves religious theories, opinions and speculations which were the real occasion of the unhappy controversies and strifes which had so long desolated the religious world. He, therefore, insisted with great earnestness upon a return to the simple teachings of the Scriptures, and upon the entire abandonment of everything in religion for which there could not be produced a Divine warrant. Finally, after having again and again reviewed the ground they occupied in the reformation which they felt it their duty to urge upon religious society, he went on to announce, in the most simple and emphatic terms, the great principle upon which he understood they were acting, and upon which, he trusted, they would continue to act, consistently and perseveringly to the end. 'That rule, my highly respected hearers,' said he in conclusion, 'is this, that WHERE THE SCRIPTURES SPEAK, WE SPEAK; AND WHERE THE SCRIPTURES ARE SILENT, WE ARE SILENT.'

Upon the annunciation a solemn silence pervaded. Never before had religious duty been presented to them in so simple a form. Never before had the great principle on which this religious enterprise rested been so clearly presented to their minds. It was to many of them as a new revelation, and those simple words, which embodied a rule so decisive of all religious strifes and of all distressing doubts, were forever engraven upon their hearts. Henceforth, the plain and simple teaching of the Word of God itself was to be their guide. God himself should speak to them, and they should receive and repeat his words alone. No remote inferences, no fanciful interpretations, no religious theories of any kind, were to be allowed to alter or pervert its obvious meaning. Having God's Word in their possession, they must speak it faithfully. There should be no contention, henceforth, in regard to the opinions of men, however wise or learned. Whatever private opinions might be entertained upon matters not clearly revealed must be retained in silence, and no effort must be made to impose them upon others. Thus the *silence* of the Bible was to be respected equally with its revelations, which were by Divine authority declared to be able 'to make the man of God perfect and thoroughly furnished unto every

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good work.' Anything more, then, must be an encumbrance. Anything less than 'the whole counsel of God' would be a dangerous deficiency. Simply, reverentially, confidingly, they would speak of Bible things in Bible words, adding nothing thereto and omitting nothing given by inspiration. They had thus a clear and well-defined basis of action, and the hearts of all who were truly interested re-echoed the resolve: *'Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.'* It was from the moment when these significant words were uttered and accepted that the more intelligent ever afterward dated the *formal and actual commencement of the Reformation* which was subsequently carried on with so much success, and which has already produced such important changes in religious society over a large portion of the world.<sup>5</sup>

One immediate result of the meeting held at the home of a Mr. Alters was that those friendly to the principles stated by Campbell agreed to band themselves together as "voluntary advocates for church reformation." This organization was given the name "The Christian Association of Washington." In order to acquaint the public with its object the Association had prepared and printed a document known as a Declaration and Address. This document, written in a kindly spirit, pointed out the evils of division and the need for a return to the New Testament order in religion.

About the time of the appearance of the Declaration and Address Campbell's family arrived in America. The oldest child in the family was Alexander, then twenty-one years of age. It is not surprising that Alexander was inclined to considerations of religion. Too, during his stay in the old world after his father's departure for America, he had had such experiences as not only quickened his interest in religious matters but inclined him to careful discrimination. When he had had some time to acquaint himself with the sentiments expressed in the Declaration and Address he found himself agreeable to its principles and duly announced himself as ready to support its aims. This was indeed a great development, for this young man was in the coming years destined to accomplish one of the greatest works of religious history.

The work of Alexander Campbell began in a modest and altogether natural way. After about two years had passed Thomas Campbell took steps to have The Christian Association approved and received by the Synod in his section. The Synod, however, declined to accept the Association. It should be said, too, that the

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<sup>5</sup>Memoirs of Alexander Campbell (R-son), pp. 235-237.

## GRADUAL GROWTH OF THE PATTERN

Synod not only declined to receive the Association but made such statements as amounted to an aggressive attack on the Association. The kindly spirit of the persons who had shaped and adopted the Declaration and Address had moved them to incorporate in the document the declaration that they would not permit themselves to be drawn into controversy in the matter. But Alexander did not entertain such feelings. Further, as he was not one of those who had prepared the document in question he did not feel bound by the announced purpose of refraining from defense of their principles. Accordingly, Alexander felt himself called upon to take up the defense of the efforts toward a return to the New Testament standard. Thus began a career whose account was to be written deep in enduring history.

It should be said in this immediate connection that in 1811 the members of The Christian Association dissolved the Association to denominate themselves a church. In as much as the meetinghouse was near the ravine known as Brush Run, the church was referred to as Brush Run Church.

Almost immediately there arose in the congregation the question of baptism. To make a long story short, the outcome was that all the Campbells and some others of the group were immersed. In connection with this particular instance of baptism the following account as given by Robert Richardson is of more than common interest:

Wednesday, the 12th day of June, 1812, having been selected, Elder Luce, in company with Elder Henry Spears, called at Thomas Campbell's on their way to the place chosen for the immersion, which was the deep pool in Buffalo Creek where three members of the Association had formerly been baptized. Next morning, as they were setting out, Thomas Campbell simply remarked his wife had put up a change of raiment for herself and him, which was the first intimation given that they also intended to be immersed. Upon arriving at the place, as the greater part of the members of Brush Run Church, with a large concourse of others, attracted by the novelty of the occasion, were assembled at David Bryant's house, near the place, Thomas Campbell thought it proper to present, in full, the reasons which had determined his course. In a very long address, he accordingly reviewed the entire ground which he had occupied, and the struggles that he had undergone in reference to the particular subject of baptism, which he had earnestly desired to dispose of, in such a manner, that it might be no hindrance in the attainment of that Christian unity which he had labored to establish from the Bible alone. In endeavoring to do this, he admitted that he had been led to overlook its importance, and the very many plain and obvious teachings of the Scriptures on the

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subject but having at length attained a clearer view of duty, he felt it incumbent to submit to what he now plainly saw was an important Divine institution. Alexander immediately followed in an extended defense of their proceedings, urging the necessity of submitting implicitly to all God's commands, and showing that the baptism of believers only, was authorized by the Word of God.

In his remarks, he had quoted, among other Scriptures, the command of Pow to the believers on the By of Pentecost: 'Repent and be baptized, everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit;' and had dwelt at length upon the gracious promises of God to all who should obey him. When he had concluded, James Hanen, who, with his wife, had also concluded to be baptized, took his child from his mother's arms, and requesting her to walk aside, asked her what she thought of the declaration of Peter, 'You shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.' Mrs. Hanen, being well acquainted with the Scriptures, soon gave a satisfactory reply, and both were accordingly baptized along with the rest, consisting of Alexander Campbell and his wife; his father and mother, and his sister—in all seven persons. Alexander had stipulated with Elder Luce that the ceremony should be performed precisely according to the pattern given in the New Testament, and that, as there was no account of any of the first converts being called upon to give what is called a 'religious experience' this modern custom should be omitted, and that the candidates should be admitted on the simple confession that 'Jesus is the Son of God.'<sup>6</sup>

As the preaching of Alexander begins more and more to move into the account, definite attention might well be given to some aspects of his work. In John Augustus Williams' account of the first contacts of Alexander Campbell and Elder John Smith, this interesting information is disclosed:

Mr. Campbell arose and read the allegory of Hagar and Sarah, in the fourth chapter of Galatians. After giving a general outline of the whole Epistle, and showing how it ought to be read, in order to arrive at the Apostle's meaning, he took up the allegory itself. In a simple, plain, and artless manner, leaning with one hand on the head of his cane, he went through his discourse. There was nothing about the man to call off the mind of the listeners from what he was saying. He seemed, as Smith afterward remarked, to move in a higher sphere or latitude than that in which the isms of the day abounded. When the congregation was dismissed, Smith immediately remarked to Elder Vaughn:

'Is it not hard, brother Billy, to ride twenty miles, as I have done, just to hear a man preach thirty minutes?'

'You are mistaken, brother John; look at your watch. It has surely been longer than that?'

He looked at his watch, and to his surprise, saw that the discourse had been just two hours and a half long.

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<sup>6</sup>Memoirs of Alexander Campbell (R-son), Chapter XVIII.

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In the same account it is related that in conversation with Alexander Campbell Elder John Smith later remarked:

'Brother Campbell, I have seen some of these preachers who were educated for the ministry in the eastern colleges; and I was much surprised to find in you an entire want of gesture and manner. You leaned upon your cane easily, though somewhat awkwardly, and *talked* as men commonly talk!

'I long ago studied all those arts of elocution of which you speak, brother John,' said Campbell; 'but I have conscientiously refrained from any attempts to use them.' Smith looked at him with curious surprise.

'The apostle,' continued Mr. Campbell, 'were sent forth as witnesses to a great certain fact. Suppose that one of them should, in making his statement before the people, have plied his arms in gesticulations, stamped his foot in vehemence, and declared his testimony in the ears of the people, in a loud, stentorian voice?' 'I would not have believed one word he said,' interrupted Smith.

'But how weightily fell the words of these first great preachers,' said Mr. Campbell, 'when with composure of manner, natural emphasis, and solemn deliberation, they spoke forth the words of truth and soberness.'<sup>7</sup>

The foregoing is quite enlightening with respect to the manner and method employed by Campbell in his preaching. Over the years of his labors he ranged the whole field of religious thought. If one will read, however, the Campbell-Rice Debate a comprehensive view may be had of all the fundamental matters in the work of the restoration. This debate was held in Lexington, Kentucky, in 1843, and continued during sixteen days. It easily takes place among the great religious debates of history.

It is well to observe that those associated with Campbell were rather generally inclined to refer to themselves as *disciples*.

### 3. *The Work of Walter Scott*

The next great development in the preaching in the work of restoring the ancient order of things came most unexpectedly in the work of Walter Scott in the northeastern section of Ohio, a section then referred to as the Western Reserve. As Scott's work proved of such significance attention could well be given to particulars concerning the man. He was born in Drumnfriesshire, Scotland, October 31, 1796, and was educated at the University of Edinburgh. Soon after his work in Edinburgh he came to America

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<sup>7</sup>Life of Elder John Smith (Williams), pp. 131-134.

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and settled at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. At that time he was a Presbyterian. Soon, however, he fell under the influence of the work the Campbells were doing among the Baptists in that section. As a consequence of these associations he was immersed and cast his lot with the Baptists. His biographer, William Baxter, has this to say about him:

He was about middle height, quite erect, well formed, easy and graceful in all his movements; his hair black and glossy, even to advanced age; he had piercing black eyes, which seemed at one time to burn, at another to melt; his face was a remarkable one, the saddest, or gladdest, as melancholy or joy prevailed; his voice was one of the richest I ever heard, suited to the expression of every emotion of the soul-and when his subject took full possession of him, he was an orator. I have heard Bascom, and Stockton, and many other gifted ministers, but none to compare with him; he stands alone.<sup>8</sup>

Not so very long after his friendly attachment with the Baptists Scott was appointed to labor as evangelist in the territory of the 'Mahoning Association, the territory already referred to as lying within the section known as the Western Reserve. As a result of an apparently chance remark in conversation he was led to give much thought to what he termed the consecutive order in the administration of the gospel. As he studied the matter he arranged the items in this order: 1, faith; 2, repentance; 3, baptism; 4, remission of sins, 5, gift of the Holy Spirit. He went over and over this matter until he was assured that he was right. Then he resolved to preach this truth as he found it. Unwilling, however, to preach such an apparently unheard of thing within the territory of the Association, he went into another territory, set forth the truth in a sermon, and invited any penitent believer to come forward for baptism. No one responded. Encouraged, even more than ever, he resolved to preach the truth even within the territory of the Association. Acting on this resolve, he sent an appointment to New Lisbon. Because this sermon has come to hold such a place in religious history the following account is quoted:

His theme was the confession of Peter, Matt. 16:16: 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God,' and the promise which grew out of it, that he should have entrusted to him the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The declaration of Peter was a theme upon which he had thought for years; it was a fact which he regarded the four gospels as written to

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<sup>8</sup>Life of Walter Scott (William Baxter).

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establish; to which type and prophecy had pointed in all the ages gone by; which the Heavenly Father had announced when Jesus came up from the waters of Jordan and the Spirit descended and abode upon him, and which was repeated again amid the awful grandeur and solemnity of the transfiguration scene. He then proceeded to show that the foundation truth of Christianity was the divine nature of the Lord Jesus-the central truth around which all others revolved, and from which they derived their efficacy and importance-and that the belief of it was calculated to produce such love in the heart of him who believed it as would lead him to true obedience to the object of his faith and love. To show how that faith and love were to be manifested, he quoted the language of the great commission, and called attention to the fact that Jesus had taught his apostles, 'that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name beginning at Jerusalem! He then led his hearers to Jerusalem on the memorable Pentecost and bade them listen to an authoritative announcement of the law of Christ, now to be made known for the first time, by the same Peter to whom Christ had promised to give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which he represented as meaning the conditions upon which the guilty might find pardon at the hands of the risen, ascended, and gloried Son of God, and enter his kingdom.

After a rapid yet graphic review of Peter's discourse, he pointed out its effect on those that heard him, and bade them mark the enquiry which a deep conviction of the truth they had heard forced from the heart-pierced multitudes, who, in their agony at the discovery that they had put to death the Son of God, their long-expected Messiah, cried out, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' and then, with flashing eye and impassioned manner, as if he fully realized that he was but re-echoing the words of one who spake as the Spirit gave him utterance, he gave the reply, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit! He then with great force and power, made his application; he insisted that the conditions were unchanged, that the word of God meant what it said, and that to receive it and obey it was to obey God and to imitate the example of those who, under the preaching of the apostles, gladly accepted the gospel message. His discourse was long, but his hearers marked not the lot of time; We Baptism forgo, in admiration of its scriptural beauty and simplicity, that it was contrary to much of their own teaching and practice; some of them who had been, in a measure, enlightened before, rejoiced in the truth the moment they received it; and to others, who had long been perplexed by the difficulties and contradictions of the discordant views of the day, it was like light to weary travelers long benighted and lost. The man of all others, however, in that community who would most have delighted in and gladly accepted those views, so old and yet so new, was not there, although almost in hearing of the preacher, who, with such eloquence and power, was setting forth the primitive gospel. This was Wm. Amend, a pious, God-fearing man, a member of the Presbyterian Church, and regarded by his neighbors as an 'Israelite indeed.' He had for some time entertained the same views as those Mr. Scott was



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then preaching in that place for the first time, but was not aware that anyone agreed with him. He was under the impression that all the churches-his own among the number, had departed from the plain teachings of the Word of God. He had discovered, some time before, that infant baptism was not taught in the Bible, and, that consequently he was not a baptized man; the mode of baptism seemed also to him to have been changed, and he sought his pastor, and asked to be immersed, He endeavored to convince him that it was wrong, but finding that he could not be turned from him purpose, he proposed to immerse him privately, lest others of his flock might be unsettled in their minds by his doing so, and closed by saying that baptism was not essential to salvation. Mr. Amend regarded everything that Christ had ordained as being essential, and replied that he should not immerse him at all; that he would wait until he found a man who believed the Gospel, and who could, without any scruple, administer the ordinance as he conceived it to be taught in the New Testament.

He was invited a day or two before to hear Mr. Scott, but knowing nothing of his views, he supposed that he preached much as others did, but agreed to go to hear him. It was near the close of the service when he reached the Baptist Church and joined the crowd at the door, who were unable to get into the house. The first sentence he heard aroused and excited him; it sounded like that gospel he had read with such interest at home, but never had heard from the pulpit before. He now felt a great anxiety to see the man who was speaking so much like the oracles of God, and pressed through the throng into the house. Mr. Dibble, the clerk of the church, saw him enter, and knowing that he had been seeking and longing to find a man who would preach as the Word of God read, thought within himself, 'Had Mr. Amend been here during all the discourse I feel sure he would have found what he has so long sought in vain. I wish the preacher would repeat what he said before he came in! Greatly to his surprise the preacher did give a review of the various points of the discourse, insisting that the Word of God meant what it said, and urging his hearers to trust that Word implicitly. He rehearsed again the Jerusalem scene, called attention to the earnest, anxious cry of the multitude, and the comforting reply of the apostle, "Repent, and he baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." He invited any one present who believed with all his heart, to yield to the terms proposed by the apostle, and show by a willing obedience his trust in the Lord of life and glory. Mr. Amend pressed his way through the crowd to the preacher and made known his purpose; made a public declaration of his belief in the Lord Jesus Christ and his willingness to obey him, and on the same day, in a beautiful, clear stream which flows on the southern border of the town, in the presence of a great multitude, he was baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Life of Walter Scott (William Baxter).

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One writer has the following to say about the preaching of Walter Scott:

The style of preaching was at least intelligible to the popular mind. The whole subject of conversion was at that time much obscured by mysticism, abstract operations of the Holy Spirit, and indefiniteness as to the time when and the place where the penitent believer could be assured of pardon. Among the Baptists, what was called a 'Christian experience' was usually accepted as the evidence of pardon. These 'experiences' were sometimes very curious and ludicrous. They nearly always lacked dignity and were, for the most part, wholly without even a Scripture reference, to say nothing of misapplication of Scripture, even when it was mentioned. The new doctrine, however, had both Scripture and definiteness to recommend it. Whoever read the New Testament with care could not fail to see that there was in many passages a close connection between baptism and remission of sins, and these Scriptures became a powerful instrumentality in the hands of as eloquent a preacher as Mr. Scott was. He quoted these texts with a full measure of faith, and there was no doubt as to their meaning from his point of view. To the average enquirer his preaching was like a new revelation from Heaven. Hundreds of people declared that they now for the first time could read their titles clear, for the reason that they could quote the Word of God for every step they had taken in accepting the Gospel of Christ.

When the Campbells heard of Scott's action, they feared that his warmth and enthusiasm had led him into an extreme step. As far back at 1820, Mr. Campbell had, in his debate with Walker, said: "Baptism is connected with the promise of the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit." But it appears that Campbell saw this only in the light of an *argument* and failed to make the principle a matter of practice. But Scott reduced the divine principle to practice. Desiring to safeguard against extremes, the Campbells decided that Thomas Campbell should visit the scene of Scott's labors and observe his work. After he had spent some time with Scott, Thomas Campbell addressed to Alexander Campbell these significant words:

I perceive that theory and practice in religion, as well as in other things, are matters of distinct consideration. . . . We have spoken and published many things correctly concerning the ancient gospel, its Simplicity and perfect adaptation to the present state of mankind, for the benign and gracious purposes of its immediate relief and complete salvation; but I must confess that, in respect of the direct exhibition and application of it for that blessed purpose, I am present, for the first time, upon the ground where the thing has appeared to be practically exhibited to the proper purpose."

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<sup>10</sup>Memoirs of A. Campbell.

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The result of all this was that the Campbells threw their entire strength to the newer development in the preaching of the gospel. And it is heartening to know that the work achieved a striking measure of success.

Another glance at his work as a preacher is afforded in the following striking passage:

The audience was large and intelligent, composed of persons from the principal towns of the Blue Grass region. Lexington, Frankfort, Richmond, Paris, Harrodsburg, Shelbyville, and others were represented. It was my lot to accompany the preacher into the pulpit, which gave me an opportunity of observing the effect of the sermon on the listening throng. His theme was the Golden Oracle, as he termed it, as set forth in the declaration of Simon Peter—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." His exordium was solemn, impressive, grand; his language reminding me of the finest passages of Milton, and almost with his first sentence I saw that he had established a warm sympathy between himself and his hearers. He spoke of the nature of Christ, as gold mingled with clay; and then from the Old and New Testaments gathered all the glorious names which prophets and apostles applied to the Son of God—names of power, excellence, and glory, and showed how they set forth the nature of him around whom they clustered, who not only wore, but was worthy of them.

All felt that he was giving expression to their own highest conceptions of the Saviour which they had never been able to embody in words, and so fixed and intent became the attention, that the entire audience would unconsciously sway to and fro, as waves at the will of the wind, with every gesture of the speaker; if he cast his eyes upward, his hearers seemed gazing into Heaven; now a glad smile would light up every face, and anon every eye would be dim with tears; and, at the close of some marvel of description, a deep murmur or sigh would be heard, as though all had held their breath under the spell of his eloquence.

The interest was sustained throughout, and some of the passages were the finest I ever heard from the lips of a man. In one portion of his discourse he spoke of Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King. He sought the Prophet among all those who had delivered the message of God to men; but found him not at Sinai, nor at Carmel, where God owned Elijah by fire; nor among the long line of those who wept over Israel's sorrow and captivity like Jeremiah; or who, like Isaiah, heralded the dawning of a brighter day; but bowing agony in Gethsemane the Prophet he sought was found. He bade kings and conquerors, in pomp and majesty, march by—we saw Nimrod, and Nebuchadnezzar, and David, and Solomon in all his glory; Cyrus, and Alexander, and the great Julius, swelled the procession; but the King he sought was found in Pilate's judgement Hall, a soldier's purple cloak, thrown over him in mockery, for a regal robe; his scepter, a reed; for a diadem, a cruel crown of thorns; for subjects, rude soldiers with knees bent in scorn, and crying in derision, 'Hail, King of the Jews.'

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Next a procession of priests passed by-Abel, who reared his altar not far from the gates of Eden; Melchisedec, wearing crown and mitre; Aaron, in priestly robes, bearing the names of the chosen tribes on the breastplate near his heart, with all who had ministered to God in tabernacle or temple, who had offered sacrifice at the altar, or sprinkled the blood of atonement on the mercy-seat, but the Priest he sought he found on Calvary, offering himself up to God on a bloody cross, at once both priest and victim, praying for those who nailed him there, and from whose bleeding heart the viler soldier soon plucked his vile spear away. But he left us not weeping, at least not in sorrow, for he showed us the risen, glorified One, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us.'

When we bear in mind not only the work of this marvelous man but also the further fact that all the mighty men of the Movement were going along with him in this new development, we can perceive that this period must be considered epochal indeed.

### *4. Separation From the Baptists; Emergence of the Concept of Restoration*

Just at this point of our study of the work of the pioneers it is imperative that we remind ourselves that up to this time in our narrative the Campbells and those associated with them were *Baptists*. This should be fixed in mind. Let it be remembered that the church where Amend heard Walter Scott was a Baptist church. Let it be remembered that Walter Scott was himself at that time laboring as evangelist with the Mahoning Baptist Association. Let it be remembered also that at this time Campbell was a member of the Mahoning Baptist Association and was publishing the paper, *The Christian Baptist*. To be sure, they were more and more developing views contrary to those embraced in Baptist theology; but the fact remains that they considered themselves Baptists and were so considered by other Baptists. This does not at all mean that they were correct and pursuing a New Testament course in this matter. Indeed they were no more scriptural in this than in endorsing infant sprinkling when they were making their first reformatory efforts in the Christian Association. The truth is that these men were in a fog—but they were walking toward the light. The precise truth is that while in the fog they had seen the glimmering of light and had started in that direction. As men in a fog will do, they sometimes wandered aside. But they kept their general direc-

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<sup>11</sup>Life of Walter Scott (Baxter).

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tion toward the light-and, thank God, *they kept walking!* And it is in point to say that in the matters discussed in the account of Walter Scott's labors they were making definite steps toward the point where they would walk out of the fog into the full light.

Walter Scott's return to the simple New Testament order in conversion was too much for the Baptists. Let us remember, however, that the friends of the New Testament order were in the Baptist churches and were comparatively few in number. It was not long after Scott's work, therefore, until the various Baptist associations began definite steps toward dropping churches which tolerated the views which were referred to as *Campbellism*. In some instances, as in the Mahoning Association, the association went along with the newly found truth. In others, the Baptists prevailed. This process began in the latter part of 1827 and continued until about 1830. By the time of the latter mentioned year the separation of the friends of the New Testament order and the Baptists had about been accomplished.\* In this period, those pleading for the ancient order saw plainly that they could not conform to Baptist demands and follow the light of the Word of God. Properly speaking, then it was not so much a matter of their leaving the Baptists as the Baptists leaving them. The Baptists decided not to go further toward the light. The friends of "the ancient and apostolic order of things" sopped from the fog into the full, clear

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\**The Separation of the Campbells From the Baptists*. Alexander Campbell and his co-laborers had a sort of working connection with the Baptists from 1812 to 1827. Brother Norred speaks of this connection in his papers. As a point of interest to the reader, and to keep that connection constantly in the records, let us append hereto the statement made by Henry C. Vedder, Baptist historian, on the effects of the final withdrawal of the Campbells from the Baptist connection:

"When in 1827, through the influence of Reverend Walter Scott, the practice of Baptism 'unto remission of sins' became a recognized feature in the reformation, Baptists who saw in this nothing but the old heresy of baptismal regeneration, promptly bore testimony against it. The Mahoning Association, of Ohio, was so deeply permeated by the new teaching that it disbanded, and the churches followed Messrs. Campbell and Scott almost in a body." Again: "The effect of this separation was very great. The new reformation had been started, ostensibly at least, with the desire of uniting all Christian denominations. Its practical result was the addition of another to the already long list of sects. The Baptist Churches in the West and Southwest were rent in twain by the schism. Large numbers of Baptist churches went over to the reformation in a body." Vedder's "Short History of the Baptists" pp. 341-344.

Those further interested in this subject might see Dr. Jeremiah B. Jeter's work, "Baptist Principles Re-set."

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light. And they saw themselves in a changed status. Up to this time their dominant desire had been to *reform* the existing religious groups. Now they began to perceive quite clearly that their actual task was that of *restoring* the ancient order of things. It is noticeable that in this period of separation Campbell discontinued *The Christian Baptist* and began the publication of the *Millennial Harbinger* Soon, therefore, we find Campbell saying in the Harbinger:

About the commencement of the present century, finding that notes and comments, that glosses and traditions were making the Word of God of little or no effect—I say, the pious of several of the great phalanxes of the rival Christian interests did agree to unmanacle and unfetter the testimony of God and send it forth without the bolsters and crutches furnished by the schools; and this, with the spirit of enquiry which it created and fostered, has contributed much to break the yoke of clerical oppression, which so long oppressed the people—I say *clerical* oppression, for this has been, and yet is, though much circumscribed, the worst of all sorts of oppression. The understandings, the consciences, the feelings, the bodies, and the estates of men have been seized by this most relentless of tyrants. All who have demanded the first fruits and tithes; all who have paralyzed the mind and forced the assent or secured the homage of the conscience have not been tyrants. Neither have all they who have rejected and reprobated this system, been humane, courteous, and merciful. !Mere am exceptions, even among priests. If the clergy never could reform the system, the system could reform them. To repudiate this system, is to desecrate the priest; and whatever has profaned or made common the priests, has not been only unchurched, but unchristianized. Such have been the past fates of those who ventured to depart from the consecrated way. But a new order of things has, within the memory of the present generation, begun. Many of the priests have become obedient to the faith, and the natural, political, and religious rights of men have begun to be much better understood. All these indications are favorable to the hopes of the expectants of the restoration of the ancient order of things

From this time on, the work was not so much mere reformation— their increasing hope was the restoration of the simple, New Testament order. The fog was behind-the light was full upon them!

One naturally enquires, however, concerning any denominational status held by those who were laboring for the New Testament order. The general situation which came to exist is well illustrated by the following incident which arose in South Benson, one of the oldest and largest Baptist congregations in Franklin Association in Kentucky:

The aggrieved party still begged that the December action, which charged them with error and corruption, should be repealed, expressing

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a willingness, in that event, for the sake of peace, to live quietly under the old Constitution. Even Doctor Noel himself, and, in fact, all the preachers present, at last relented, and urged the majority to expunge the offensive resolution; but they persistently refused to do it. Every effort at reconciliation by the milder spirits of both parties having failed, the minority came together, and, with the assistance of Jacob Creath and his nephew, constituted themselves, on the Scriptures alone, into a *Church of Jesus Christ*. For that alleged schismatic conduct, they were unanimously excluded from the Baptist church at South Benson, at its regular meeting, in February, 1830.<sup>12</sup>

This discloses the friends of a return to the simple New Testament way as finally disengaged from denominationalism. Now they could start from scratch and, without denominational encumbrance, labor for the restoration of the order which existed among the divinely approved churches of New Testament times.

## THE CAMPBELLS AND THE WORK OF STONE

About the time we have reached in our narrative the Campbells and their associates came to face very definitely the problem of what they would do in regard to their attitude toward the work of Barton Warren Stone. It will be remembered that the work of Stone began in Kentucky in 1804. In fact, Stone always dated his reformatory labors from the time he issued the document known as *The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery*. The work of the Campbells started, as will be recalled, in Pennsylvania, and is to be dated from the time of the address by Thomas Campbell, in which there was announced the principle, "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent." Thus the work of the Campbells started in 1809. Those who had gone along with Stone generally referred to themselves in the term "Christians." Those who went along with the Campbells generally referred to themselves as "disciples." The outsiders sometimes referred to the associates of Stone as "New Lights" or "Stoneites." Those associated with the Campbells were sometimes referred to as "Reformers" or "Campbellites." Of course, the two groups had much in common. However, there were certain very definite points of disagreement. As the work of the Campbells had been in the Baptist congregations immersion was universally required. The background of the work of Stone was found in the Presbyterians and other Pedo-Baptists. It is not surprising, there

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<sup>12</sup>Life of Elder John Smith (Williams), pp. 268-270.

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fore, that although most of the preachers associated with Stone preached immersion, they sometimes accepted as members those who had been merely sprinkled. Too, it should be borne in mind that Stone placed his emphasis on the idea of Union, whereas the Campbells rather emphasized the matter of conformity with the Scriptures.

In 1824 Mr. Campbell visited in Georgetown, Kentucky, and while there he and Stone became personally acquainted. It is certainly no matter of surprise that the men became warm friends. From this friendship there arose an increasing tendency toward better understanding and co-operation between the two groups. The outcome of all this was that a meeting was held in Lexington, Kentucky, the first day of the year of 1832, in order that the persons of the two groups might accomplish a union of their forces. It is to be regretted that sometimes this meeting is thought of as a joint meeting of the officers of two denominations for the purpose of accomplishing a merger of the two bodies. The Bible knowledge of the two groups was such that that kind of meeting could not have been held. The sole purpose was that all might come to a better understanding in order that they might more fully co-operate in the work of the Lord. In an effort to bring about this better understanding two speakers were asked to address the assembled group the man chosen to speak the view of the "Christians" was Stone himself. The man chosen to speak for the "disciples" was "Raccoon" John Smith, who, though unmentioned previously in this narrative, had come to stand in the front ranks of those preachers who pleaded for a return to the simple New Testament way. In order that we may catch the closest possible view of the labor of this pioneer, the sermon which he delivered on the occasion just mentioned is hereby offered in quotation:

God has but one people on earth. He has given to them but one Book, and therein exhorts and commands them to be one family. A union, such as we plead for—a union of God's people on that one Book—must, then, be practicable.

Every Christian desires to stand complete in the whole will of God. The prayer of the Saviour, and the whole tenor of his teaching, clearly show that it is his will that his children should be united. To the Christian, then, such a union must be desirable.

But an amalgamation of sects is not such a union as Christ prayed for, and God enjoins. To agree to be one upon any system of human invention would be contrary to his will, and could never be a blessing to the church



## PREACHING IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

or the world; therefore the only union practicable or desirable must be based on the Word of God, as the only rule of faith and practice.

There are certain abstruse or speculative matters—such as the mode of the *Divine Existence*, and the *Ground and Nature of the Atonement*—that have, for centuries, been themes of discussion among Christians. These questions are as far from being settled now as they were in the beginning of the controversy. By a needless and intemperate discussion of them much feeling has been provoked, and divisions have been produced.

For several years past I have tried to speak on such subjects only in the language of inspiration; Or A can offend no one to say about those things just what the Lord himself has said. In this scriptural style of speech all Christians should be agreed. It can not be wrong—it can not do harm. If I come to the passage, "My Father is greater than I," I will quote it, but will not stop to speculate upon the inferiority of the Son. If I read, "Being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God," I will not stop to speculate upon the consubstantial nature of the Father and the Son. I will not linger to build a theory upon such texts, and thus encourage a speculative and wrangling spirit among my brethren. I will present these subjects only in the words which the Lord has given to me. I know he will not be displeased if we say just what he has said. Whatever opinions about these and similar subjects I may have reached, in the course of my investigations, if I never distract the church of God with them, or seek to impose them on my brethren, they will never do the world any harm.

I have the more cheerfully resolved on this course, because the Gospel is a system of facts, commands and promises, and no deduction or inference from them, however logical or true, forms any part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. No heaven is promised to those who hold them, and no hell is threatened to those who deny them. They do not constitute, singly or together, any item of the ancient and apostolic Gospel.

While there is but one faith, there may be ten thousand opinions; and hence, if Christians are ever to be one, they must be one in faith, and not in opinion. When certain subjects arise, even in conversation or social discussion, about which there is a contrariety of opinion and sensitiveness of feeling, speak of them in the words of the Scriptures, and no offense will be given, and no pride of doctrine will be encouraged. We may even come, in the end, by thus speaking of the same things, to think the same things.

For several years past, I have stood pledged to meet the religious world, or any part of it, on the ancient Gospel and order of things, as presented in the words of the Book. This is the foundation on which Christians once stood, and on it they can, and ought to, stand again. From this I can not depart to meet any man, or set of men, in the wide world. While, for the sake of peace and Christian union, I have long since waived the public maintenance of any speculation I may hold, *yet not one Gospel fact, commandment, or promise, will I surrender for the world!*

Let us, then, my brethren, be no longer Campbellites or Stoneites, New Lights or Old Lights, or any other kind of *lights*, but let us all come to

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the Bible alone, as the only book in the world that can give us all the light we need.<sup>13</sup>

When Brother Smith had finished, Brother Stone arose and, in a few well-chosen words, declared himself in complete accord with all that had been said. Then as the congregation joined in song all marched toward the front to extend to one another the hand of fellowship. The next day, the Lord's day, all met together in the Lord's Supper. Thus we not only see in this account something of the preaching which the pioneers did, but can see something of the results it achieved.

### DID THE PREACHERS OF THE RESTORATION PREACH A "FULL GOSPEL"?

In this general study of the preaching of the pioneers in the work of restoring the divine order in religion a definite emphasis has been placed on the study of the pattern of preaching which makes itself evident as we study the preaching of the pioneers. But this particular phase of the study might awaken the question as to whether these pioneer preachers preached a full gospel or confined themselves to what we have come to call first principles. Let US, therefore, at this place give some attention to that particular question.

To begin with, a great deal of care must be employed here in order to form and set forth a true and faithful picture of the exact situation. We should indeed remind ourselves that the expression *a full gospel* is an expression of very wide scope. To be exact, the gospel is the whole content of the inspired truth of the New Testament. If one were rash enough to deny this statement, the evidence which could be offered in reply is ample and overwhelming. As an instance of reply it might, first, be pointed out that Jesus commissioned the inspired preachers to preach the gospel. But the New Testament is a record of their teaching. If the inspired men were faithful to their commission the full content of the New Testament becomes embraced within the general field of the gospel. This makes the letters written to the church as definitely a part of the gospel as the Acts of the Apostles. To be exact, then, to say that certain preachers preached a full gospel is to say that they preached the full content of the New Testament.

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<sup>13</sup>Life of Elder John Smith (Williams), pp. 371-373.

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As a further consideration, we should remind ourselves that it is not always necessary that one preach the full gospel. For instance, the preacher who found himself before a waiting congregation would certainly not be under the necessity of preaching to that particular gathering the full content of the New Testament. Let us suppose that the preacher in question possessed accurate information as to the precise need existing in the group he was about to address. Would it not be wise and expedient for him to confine himself to the matter of particular need? The plain truth is that such is the divine pattern. For instance, when Paul left Titus in Crete, he gave clear instructions that he was to "set in order the things that were wanting." Certainly then in any given time and place the wise and conscientious preacher of the Word of God should not be so much interested in reciting the full content of the New Testament as in "handling aright the word of truth" and setting forth that particular part of the divine truth called for in the need of the particular situation. In the light of these distinctions we must be able to see that it would be exceedingly unjust and untruthful to seize upon a certain occasion and say that because the preaching there did not encompass the full content of the New Testament the preaching was subject to the criticism that it was not that of the full gospel. Only when preaching fails in setting forth the needed truth is it subject to the criticism that it is not gospel preaching.

With these preliminary considerations fixed in mind we are prepared to move further and to observe that the pioneers did actually face precise and particular problems and needs. First, there was the glaring evil of denominational division, This in turn embraced the evil of human creeds, But the matter of creeds necessarily brought forward the fundamental issue of the authority of Christ. And the matter of authority of Christ turned attention to the New Testament Scriptures, as a full and complete revelation of the will of Christ. These matters presented precise needs. But development of those questions was gradual Too, the development came in just about the order recited in this paragraph. But the study of the divine word which arose from the development just presented brought forward more and more the great question of conversion. And this immediately brought forward another major development. Almost from the very outset of the work the pioneers began to see the need for a clearer understanding and

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more definite statement of the truth pertaining to conversion. It will be remembered that Stone ran into this question. Too, in the growing difference between the Campbells and the Baptists the question of conversion continued to move into the picture. In the very beginning the Campbells began to express disapproval of the prevailing views in regard to the work of the Holy Spirit. Quite generally it was held then that in as much as the sinner is represented in the Scriptures as being dead in trespasses and sins it was necessary that the Holy Spirit in some abstract manner regenerate the sinner and quicken him into life before he could have any interest in salvation. Conversion was therefore supposed to be a weird and mysterious process. It was rather customary therefore for the person who claimed conversion to recite an "experience," an experience of strange sights and sounds and feelings. Now, the Reformers were from the first unfriendly to such notions. They argued that the Holy Spirit accomplished his work through the word of the gospel, and that, therefore, any person who in faith executed the requirements of the gospel could be saved. This necessarily embraced the fundamental principle that in conversion the individual is active. And the very statement that the individual is active in conversion brings forward the necessity of stating the particulars embraced in that activity. Hence the ground was laid for the development of the truth of conversion. Then came the full development in that field as seen in the work of Walter Scott in the Western Reserve. But when this development broke it was seen to be so fundamental and to embrace so much that the question became climactic for all those developments preceding it and became somewhat an overall consideration in all the work of the pioneers. Consequently the pioneers began to give their very special attention to the question of conversion. And their work in that particular matter was indeed monumental. A well-known British writer, William Robinson, in referring to the work of the pioneers in the matter of conversion, declares: "Here we are to deal with what is, I feel, the greatest contribution Churches of Christ have made to religious thought."

The plain facts of history therefore go to show that the pioneers did address themselves to the primary field of conversion. And indeed it must be plain that they could not have been faithful and done otherwise. But does this mean that we would be justified in alleging that

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these pioneers were actually neglectful of other questions embraced in the content of the gospel? In this matter we are again confronted with the need for extreme care, that we may speak in truthfulness and fairness. It should be remembered that the work of the pioneers embraces the work of many different individuals. And since those individuals represented varying degrees of ability and attainment and faithfulness, to say that all these persons were characterized by wisdom and faithfulness would involve considerable risk. But to allege, on the other hand, that the pioneers confined themselves to first principles to the neglect of other needed truth—that would be, as we sometimes say, something else! And certainly before making such statement a survey should be made of the field covered in the work of the pioneers. A study of the statements and writing of Alexander Campbell, for instance, will show that he roamed with ease and confidence over the whole field of divine truth. In this connection there might be mentioned *The Christian System*, *The Christian Baptist*, *The Millennial Harbinger*, *Popular Addresses*, *The Campbell-Rice Debate*, *The Campbell-Owen Debate*, etc. And let us not forget Walter Scott. Walter Scott figured pre-eminently in the restoration of the administration of the gospel in the matter of conversion. Yet Walter Scot gave definite attention to other matters. For instance, we are indebted to Scott for much clear teaching on the work of the Holy Spirit. In his work in this matter he, for instance, offered the following distinctions in reference to three missionaries:

1. Jesus Christ was sent of God to the Jewish nation.
2. The apostles were sent by the Lord Jesus Christ to the world.
3. The Holy Spirit was sent to the church.

The significance of these distinctions can hardly fail of impressing itself upon any thoughtful person. The scope of this particular truth can be seen in reading the biography of Walter Scott as written by William Baxter. And it is certainly in point to say that anyone who will read the work just cited would probably be very slow to assert that Walter Scott was merely a first principle preacher. And let us not forget Moses E. Lard. Let us particularly remind ourselves that his *Commentary on Romans* is still a source book among gospel preachers and writers. And there was Robert Milligan. Surely any informed person

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who will make even a casual examination of Milligan's great work, *The Scheme of Redemption*, will never assert that Milligan confined himself to first principles.

As a matter of fact, the pioneer preachers were, all in all, men of extensive preparation. To be sure, they faced special problems. And it is gratifying to discern that they addressed themselves with wisdom to those particular problems. And it must be agreed that a fair appraisal of their work must take notice of their desire to be faithful in the work of declaring "the whole counsel of God."

### PART III

*"For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.*

*And again, the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.*

*Therefore let no man glory in men."—1 Cor. 3:19-21.*

PREACHING IN A DENOMINATIONAL  
WORLD

*By*  
FANNING YATER TANT

MODERNISM

PREMILLENNIALISM

PREACHING

LITURGICAL TREND

SUBJECTS OMITTED

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## PREACHING IN A DENOMINATIONAL WORLD

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One of the most famous trials in American religious history was that in which Dr. Charles A. Briggs was found guilty by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America of teachings "contrary to the essential doctrine of the Holy Scriptures and the Standards of said Presbyterian Church," and was suspended from the ministry of that denomination. It all grew out of an address delivered by Dr. Briggs on the occasion of his inauguration as Professor of Biblical Theology in Union Theological Seminary, January 20, 1891.

It was charged that, in that address, Dr. Briggs had advocated the idea that "Reason is a fountain of divine authority which can and does savingly enlighten men, even such men as reject the Scriptures as the authoritative proclamation of the will of God and reject also the way of salvation through the mediation and sacrifice of the Son of God as revealed therein." For long weary months there were hearings and statements and counter-statements. Delegations, committees, sub-committees, and individuals called on Dr. Briggs seeking to persuade him to recant and withdraw, or at least modify his teachings. But all to no avail. He affirmed them and repeated them. He was found guilty; appealed the decision, got a reversal, and a new trial, and was again found guilty. His suspension followed.

The whole lengthy story of the trial and its many ramifications was compiled by John J. McCook into a book of nearly four hundred pages bearing the imposing title of "The Appeal in the Briggs Heresy Case Before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America." The book was published in 1893.

Half a century has passed since those days. The record of that trial reads more like a story from another world than like a story merely from another century. To those who are conversant with the modern trend of denominational thinking, it seems inconceiv-

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able that such a trial could have been held only fifty years ago. For the position advocated by Dr. Briggs and for which he was suspended by his denomination, is one which most of the eminent preachers in nearly all the larger denominations would accept today with never a moment's hesitation or misgiving. There are very few of them who would argue that it is impossible for man to be "savingly enlightened" separate and apart from the Bible. There are very few who would not admit to a belief that multitudes of people have "found God" in nature, in work, or in various ways, with little or no knowledge of what the Bible teaches about him.

One of the greatest of our modernist preacher, Harry Emerson Fosdick, has written and preached much about this "extra-Biblical" religion. He has repeatedly alluded to the deep faith in God and the high Christian character which is to be found among vast multitudes who can no longer accept the Bible as authoritative. He says, "We are living now, not for the first time or, I suspect, for the last time in history, through a day of rapid change, when so much new knowledge has been copiously poured into our minds that the channels of our religious thinking have been flooded and the consequent confusion is so bewildering and the impossibility of phrasing faith in the old formularies so obvious that many think it positively insincere to make any profession involving religious faith. So we get nothing from them except disbeliefs. All their publicity is negative. They do not think this; they do not think that-such is the total impression they make. They market nothing but their doubts. Yet often when one converses intimately with them, when one knows them as they are, one sees that they have goods aplenty to market besides doubt. They are not adequately represented when they are called unchristian or irreligious. One finds in them a real faith, deep reservoirs of Christian character and conviction . . ." (The Power to See It Through, page 165).

Nor is Dr. Fosdick alone in celebrating the virtues of those who reject the Bible as authoritative and who are stumped by "the impossibility of phrasing faith in the old formularies." From the most influential pulpits in America, as well as from religious leaders all over the world, there have come the same expressions. Speaking of the authority of Jesus, Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, President of Union Theological Seminary, said, "Historical criticism of the Gospels rightly refuses to accept every saying ascribed to him as a verbatim report. The Gospels have to be assessed as sources for

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our knowledge of him, and the figure of the Man of Nazareth must be reconstructed and placed in the setting of his time" (What Men Are Asking, page 97).

The late S. Parkes Cadman said, "I reassert my belief that the souls of men are not doomed to destruction hereafter because they accept some religion other than that of the Christian. But this does not prevent me from believing that the full meaning of man's salvation is to be found only in Christianity. There is a vast difference between being 'lost' and being 'completely saved,' as the New Testament puts it. We have not yet attained 'the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.' 'Saving' a soul is a divine task which required infinitely more than this life affords to accomplish its full intent and purpose.

"As I see it, a Buddhist or a Moslem is not condemned to eternal darkness for the sole reason that he was loyal to his ancestral faith. Neither does his loyalty entitle him to the perfect moral and spiritual sovereignty which Christ's redemptive work secures for man. He has still to face the revelation of God in Christ, and he must see himself and his Creator with the eyes of Christ before he can obtain the universal blessedness Christianity is designated to give to all who observe this condition" (Answers to Everyday Questions, page 154).

These men are typical of thousands of the leading clergymen of our generation. All the old standards of authority in religion have been weakened, if not destroyed. We must seek, they say, to hold forth a new and better authority for our generation-one more acceptable intellectually to the enlightened era in which we live. Whereas our fathers with their limited knowledge of the "assured results of higher criticism" were willing to accept the Bible as their final and complete authority in religion, enlightened men of our day recognize that A is inadequate. A new approach must be found to solve the old, old problems of our daily living. We can be safe in accepting Jesus as authoritative, but-where can we find Jesus? The picture of him as set forth in the Gospels is obviously colored and distorted by the ignorance and superstitions of the times in which he lived. Perhaps the best solution would be to dig through the documents of the New Testament, accept what we can as being reliable, then take the highest and most exalted teachings of the most deeply spiritual men of every age, and from these, combined with our own inner consciousness of God, evolve

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a standard of right and authority which seems right in our eyes, and one which is satisfactory to the highest instincts of the race.

The famous, or infamous (according to whether you agreed with them or did not) Layman's Missionary Inquiry was a project financed largely by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and was sent out in 1931 to assay the value of the whole missionary enterprise of Protestant Christianity. The commission was made up of leading laymen from seven of the larger Protestant denominations. It was an independent inquiry, however, having no official connection with any of the churches. They went to the mission fields of the Orient spending eight months in their on-the-spot investigations, and came back to issue their findings and their recommendations in a weighty volume of some 400 pages entitled "Report of the Laymen's Missionary Inquiry." The book stirred up a virtual hornet's nest of controversy all over the Protestant world. It was approved and denounced, both publicly and privately, in nearly every Protestant church in the land.

It is easily understandable why there would be disagreement over the book, for it was the profound and considered opinion of these devout Protestant laymen that for all practical purposes the Protestant Missionary Enterprise up to the present time must be marked down as a dismal failure. They were specific and factual in their reporting. They pointed out one error after another; one failure after another, through every mission field they investigated. But one thing that so disturbed their various churches was the final conclusion to which the men came, and their final recommendation for the future of their mission efforts. The recommendations were larded with many evasive and ambiguous phraseologies; but in their essence they were that Christianity, as known and believed by the Occident, was not practicable to the Orient. Therefore, the best elements should be taken from Christianity, and the best elements should be taken from the leading religions in each country into which the missionaries entered. From these most exalted teachings of all the religions a sort of synthesis should be worked out which would give the people of each land a religion suited to their needs and background, and combining the best features of all the living religions. The Christian missionaries should not insist on the absolute uniqueness of Christ; they should not persist in their efforts to get people to renounce everything in their former religions. Rather they should encourage them to become Christians

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and continue to hold on to the best they had in their old forms of belief.

The Report was filled with compromising quotations and expressions of which the following are typical: "All religions are ways to God."

"The identities of meaning, though different in symbol, should not hold us apart."

"Christianity, like all non-Christian faiths, must stand upon the common ground of all religion."

"The fate of religion in China depends chiefly on the native religions."

"The final truth, whatever it may be, is the new testament of every existing faith."

"Christianity and the Oriental religions must 'grow side by side.'"

"The relation between religions must take increasingly hereafter the form of a common search for truth."

It is inconceivable that any of the prominent laymen who made up the personnel of the "Laymen's Missionary Commission" would have taken issue at all with Dr. Briggs' statement that a man might be "savingly enlightened" separate and apart from the Bible. They would, on the contrary, regard a man who would even question such a position a hopeless obscurantist. To them, it is simply axiomatic that God reveals himself in a myriad of ways to the children of men. Whereas he may speak to some through the Bible, and what we know as historic Christianity, he speaks to others through Judaism, to others through Hindooism, to others through the beauties of nature, to others through a call to service for humanity, etc., etc. And in any way God speaks it is possible for the man to whom the call comes to be "savingly enlightened."

Indeed, the whole question of "salvation" has come to be increasingly questioned by the schools of modernism. That word has become a sort of shibboleth, marking anyone who uses it in the traditional senses as incompetent and non-progressive. Even Dr. Briggs himself, for all his heretical views, probably had an idea of salvation which would be laughed out of court by the "enlightened" modernist preacher. The old concepts of hell and punishment, of a future day of judgment, of a literal chastisement for

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the wicked, do not fit into the modern picture at all. Such views are, to use the words of one of the modernists, "naive and untenable." Since there is no hell from which a man is to be "saved," and since only the uninformed and mentally retarded still believe in such, it is rather foolish to speak of salvation in the old traditional sense of the term. The modern employment of that word is earthy and not heavenly-this worldly and not other worldly. Salvation means the deliverance from ignorance, disease, poverty, frustration, fear, and all the forces of evil that have to do with our living right here and now in this present world. Its connotation is purely of this life, and not of any life to come. Being it saved from sin" means being brought to the place where one's personality is integrated and unified; where there are no hidden obsessions and weakening superstitions lurking in the dark corners of one's mind.

This whole trend toward modernism, starting from the theological schools of Germany and spreading its influence swiftly through all Protestantism, has had an incalculable effect on denominationalism. It has undermined all their belief in the worthwhileness of their peculiar denominational tenets-for those tenets were originally based upon what their founders thought were teachings of the Scriptures. Even as late as fifty years ago, most of the leading denominational preachers still believed firmly that the teachings of their individual communions were the certain and sure interpretations of the Bible. In matters wherein they differed from one another, each was fully convinced that the other was, wrong; for did not the Bible set it forth exactly as his church taught? Religious debates were common, and popular. Huge throngs would listen avidly while their representatives discussed at length their points of difference. Religious discussion in private conversation was frequent and often heated.

Now, however, the whole picture has changed. For if "higher criticism" has demonstrated that the Bible is not the infallibly inerrant document which it was formerly held to be, what is the point of proving anything by it? People of all denominations are thrown back into the same classification; everybody is searching for truth, and the Bible no longer can be accepted as pointing out a way that is unquestionably right. Religious debates have become, among denominational people, almost extinct. Where, today, is the Methodist clergyman who would enter into public

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debate with a Baptist clergyman in an endeavor to prove that infants ought to be sprinkled? And where can be found a Presbyterian pastor who will walk upon the polemic platform to defend the doctrines of total depravity and predestination? They once believed the Bible taught these doctrines, and defended them stoutly. They now have had their faith in the Bible shaken, and no longer seek to prove any particular teaching by an appeal to the statements of the Scriptures.

The extent to which the larger denominations have been emasculated and robbed of their vitality is apparent even to the leaders of those denominations themselves. They deplore the lack of conviction which has gripped the common man in the pew; they frantically search for some formula or some magic wand which will restore to their membership the deep and abiding certainties concerning what they believe they had before the modernist movement began. The lack of any emphasis on "beliefs" in the whole realm of modernism has begun to alarm some of the more astute exponents of that philosophy. They compare the virile and aggressive evangelism of the "less enlightened" elements in Christendom with their own weak and futile approach to man's sinfulness, and admit that so far, modernism has little to offer. Dr. James D. Smart, one of the most brilliant of the younger modernist theologians, in discussing the weaknesses of modernism in contrast with the strength often manifested by the people who give such emphasis to "right beliefs," says:

"It would be wrong to give the impression that we have nothing to learn from these people who give such an undue place to beliefs. As a rule they put all others in the Church to shame by the energy and earnestness of their religion. However unsatisfactory their attitude regarding beliefs may be, at least they do believe something with definiteness. The Christian faith as they present it has a distinct shape and form. They know where they stand as Christians, and they let others know where they stand. In their naive fashion, at least they do listen to hear the message of the Scriptures, and from this issues a certain forcefulness in their Christian living and their Christian witness. The more moderate and reasonable type of Christianity prevalent in the Churches seems a poor, weak, dumb thing in comparison. One can understand why earnest souls, hungering for a living, whole-hearted, and clear-cut Christian faith, have sometimes turned in this other direction, even

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though it meant putting severe blinders upon their minds. Sometimes the integrity of the mind seems a small price to pay for a living faith" (What a Man Can Believe, pages 21, 22).

Any serious attempt to deal with this problem of preaching in a denominational world must deal with the question of modernism, and its debilitating influence on the churches. The ramifications of its pressure are even greater than at first might appear. For in its practical application to the problems and needs of the man in the pew, it has precipitated 'another situation on Christendom which, in some aspects, is even more virulent than modernism itself. And that problem is premillennialism.

### PREMILLENNIALISM

There can be little question that premillennialism has gained prominence as a violent counteraction to modernism. As the modernist swung more and more to the extreme position of questioning or even denying the plain and simple statements of the Bible, there arose a contrary and opposing philosophy which wanted to take every statement with the crassest and blindest sort of literalism. Fantastic "interpretations" of passages of the Scriptures were set forth and defended. A highly emotional appeal to prejudice was pushed for all it was worth. For a man to deny some favored interpretation of a prophetic utterance, caused him to be marked down as a "modernist" and an "unbeliever." With the Premillennialist, there can be no toleration of a different point of view from his own. To him, the man who is not a premillennialist is one who does not believe the Scriptures.

Here, for example, are the words of a typical advocate of the premillennial theory: "There are two immediate dangers in the field of interpretation: (1) A direct denial of the authority of the Word of God. This is the position of the destructive critic. The scholars of this school freely admit that the Bible plainly teaches the doctrines of our faith; but they avoid the force of the truth by refusing to accept the authority of the Word itself. (2) An indirect denial of the authority of the Scriptures, which poses as devout and believing; but stands free to empty words of their natural and obvious meaning. The latter is by far the more dangerous. The partial treatment of the Scripture, and the deplorable liberty to spiritualize and vaporize the text, which has always



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characterized postmillenarianism and now characterizes non-millenarianism, has, all too often ultimately led to a dead orthodoxy, or to open infidelity; the latter having resulted almost exclusively in great, sections of Christendom. Every destructive critic is postmillenarian or nonmillenarian in belief, though he may, as so often he does, admit that his system is far from the plain teaching of the Bible. Premillenarian rationalists are absolutely unknown. They hold no dead orthodoxy based on selected proof texts. Premillennarianism is more than a belief in the certainty of a future event; it is a method of interpretation from Genesis to Revelation. It proposes to discover all the Bible teaches on a given subject and to, abide by the results" (Must We Dismiss the Millennium? by Lewis Sperry Chafer).

With an attitude of that nature, it is not to be wondered at that the premillennialists began to cause trouble in all the religious communions into which they entered. They dwelt at great length on the obvious fact that all modernists and rationalists were either nonmillenarians or postmillenarians. That being so, they argued, it must be plain that the premillenarian is the only one who accepts fully the authority and inspiration of the Bible. Thus, the two opposing forces could be identified with a clear line of demarcation between them: The modernists on the one hand with all their denial of the authority and veracity of the scriptures, the premillenarians on the other hand with their unshakeable devotion to the "very words" of the Bible itself.

Unfortunately for the cause of truth, vast numbers of the uninformed accepted this premillenarian summation of the case. They were unable to differentiate between a rejection of premillenarianism and a rejection of the authority of the Bible. The "Fundamentalists" capitalized on this situation to press all the more vigorously their claims to being the only true, the only orthodox believers in the ancient faith. Devout people in every church were faced with the dilemma of accepting a lot of weird and incredible interpretations of the prophecies on the one hand, or of casting their lot with such as denied the Virgin birth, and the miracles of our Lord on the other hand. It was not an easy choice to make. Multitudes felt themselves suddenly bereft of the fellowship of a common faith; they were left stranded on an island while the great streams of Christianity split into two diverging streams—premillennialism and modernism. They were not in sympathy with

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either; they did not believe either; but it seemed there was to be no other choice left them. They must accept the one or the other.

The Churches of Christ have been very fortunate in solving this problem. For them the alternatives have not been quite so drastic as they were in denominational churches. The general attitude of the Churches of Christ has been such that any individual here and there who has been swayed toward modernism has realized how hopelessly at variance that philosophy (for it is a philosophy rather than a theology) is with the teaching of the church. He has also apparently realized the futility of trying to change or convert the church to that position. Consequently he has rather quietly dropped out of the fellowship and association of the Church of Christ, and has attached himself to some other religious group more in sympathy with modernism. This has left the Church of Christ relatively free of any tinge of the rationalistic criticism which has so plagued the denominations. They have all been grievously troubled over this issue; divisions in sentiment and fellowship, if not open ruptures in organization, have brought confusion and acrimonious discussions to them all.

When the issue became manifest in the Church of Christ, it was not necessary to choose between modernism and premillenarianism. Those who were not willing to accept the new and unusual theories of the premillenarians could merely retain their beliefs in the ancient teachings in which they had been nurtured before the premillennial question came to the front. It did not seem to them at all that rejection of premillenarianism was a rejection of divine inspiration and the miraculous element in revelation. On the contrary, premillenarianism was merely another in the long line of heretical fancies which had bedeviled the church from the days of the apostles. It was exactly on the same basis as the doctrine of election, predestination, impossibility of apostasy, direct operation of the Holy Spirit, and infant baptism. It was the work of man—a fanciful and incredible conglomeration of Judaism, world politics, astrology (the signs of the times being read in the heavenly bodies) and plain superstition. Above all it was earthy, sensual, materialistic; centering its hopes and aspirations on an earthly political empire rather than on the spiritual verities of heaven. With few exceptions the Churches of Christ rejected premillenarianism with speed and enthusiasm. And in so doing, they felt themselves in no way obligated to accept modernism.

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The denominations were not so fortunate. One after another, they were brought to the point where they had to make a decision. The common man in the pew hardly realized what was taking place; but when he awakened to the situation, he found that his church was either a premillennial church, or it was a modernist church. Perhaps in his heart he himself was neither; but there was nothing he could do about it now. If he was to have a church home, he would have to go along with the crowd, one way or another.

Perhaps one of the most dramatic of these controversies was the one which affected the Baptist Churches in Texas. Dr. J. Frank Norris, Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Fort Worth, accepted the premillenarian doctrines after he had become pastor of that church. When it became apparent that the Baptist churches would divide over the issue, he was able to carry his congregation with him and he became the leader of a faction of Premillennial Baptists in the state of Texas with a few scattered congregations in other states. It should not be supposed, however, that all the Baptists who are premillenarians are in fellowship with the particular faction headed by Dr. Norris. He was the storm-center of notoriety; but his following is insignificant compared with the number of Baptists who are premillenarian, yet who do not recognize or fellowship him. And the number of Baptists who are premillenarian is probably insignificant compared with the number of Baptists who have taken the other horn of the dilemma and become modernists. This is especially true among the clergymen, and in the Northern Baptist Church. The outstanding modernist of our day, from whom we quoted earlier in this section, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, is a Baptist and is pastor of the Riverside Church in New York City.

Among the Presbyterians, a particularly bitter controversy raged for years around the head of Dr. J. Gresham Machen. He was connected with Princeton Seminary, and was a conservative scholar of considerable ability. He was unwilling to go along with the trend toward modernism. A violent eruption followed, with the net result that Dr. Machen became the head of a new seminary, and of a new Presbyterian Church. It was officially recognized by the courts as the Bible Presbyterian Church. Since the death of Dr. Machen, his followers have again split into opposing camps, the Bible Presbyterian Church and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and the end seems not yet in sight. Premillenarians have

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apparently taken over Dr. Machen's following. So that the issue can once again, at least for the Presbyterians, be presented as a choice between Premillenarianism and modernism. Those of Dr Machen's following who are conservative, but are not premillennial, will find themselves orphaned-shut out from fellowship with the old line Presbyterian groups, and not able to feel at ease with the new exponents of the premillennial philosophy.

What has happened to the Baptist and Presbyterian churches has happened, less dramatically perhaps, to every great denomination in America. Even the Disciples have not escaped. The conservative wing, headed by the Christian Standard group from Cincinnati, have come forth as full-blown premillenarians. They identify premillenarianism with orthodoxy. Thousands of members in the Disciples' churches have for many years been waging a bitter fight against the radically modernist elements in their movement—the modernists being led by the Christian Evangelist and the Christian Century, and the conservatives being led by the Christian Standard. Many of those who have been most bitter against modernism are not premillenarians; in fact, they never have heard much about the new theory. But with their chief organ going premillennial, and with most of the prominent men whom they have come to respect through the years coming out with premillennial arguments, they find themselves in the same predicament as the Baptists and the Presbyterians—forced to choose between premillennialism and modernism.

Meanwhile, the man in the pew has felt the repercussions of these gigantic controversies but gradually. Little by little he has realized that his pastor was changing his preaching—either he was speaking of the "new enlightenment" and the "social gospel" designed to make a heaven out of this earth (since there isn't much of a heaven anywhere else to hope for, or he was preaching more and more on the political issues of the day—finding the "anti-Christ" in every petty dictator who happened to raise his head above the run-of-the-mill party bosses of the European political picture. The "church page" in the Saturday evening papers was filled more and more with sermon topics which had political crises as their theme. Social uplift on the one hand, and political putterings on the other practically usurped the place formerly reserved for the preaching of what was once considered the gospel of salvation. Sensational announcements concerning the Kaiser

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(formerly), then later Mussolini and Stalin and Hitler, gave plenty of material for spine-tingling expostulations on the swiftly approaching "day of the Lord."

While the premillenarians were chilling and thrilling their listeners with dire predictions of approaching doom for the world, the modernists were more and more turning their churches into social uplift agencies. Since they had practically abandoned any hope for a heaven after death (and in many instances even the hope for any conscious existence beyond the grave), it became their objective to provide on this present earth all the good things which they desired. Their churches became welfare organizations concerned much more with feeding the hungry stomachs of men than in bringing men to a saving acceptance of Jesus Christ. Clubs, societies, billiard rooms, dance halls came to be accepted features in many of the modernist churches. Emphasis was placed on bettering the present life rather than making provision for any other life which might conceivably follow this one.

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The preaching on which modern denominationalism has been fed and nurtured is of all degrees of merit. Some of it is the most blatant sort of demagoguery; some of it would rate high as a lecture on the beauties of nature; a little of it (very little, one fears) is of a sort to compare favorably with the preaching of the past generations. Particularly important during the last twenty years has become the radio preacher; for this work there has been developed a technique and a style of sermonizing which is quite distinct from the usual pulpit preaching of the day.

One of the earlier radio preachers, and one who wielded a very considerable influence was Dr. S. Parkes Cadman. He was a modernist of the most liberal sort (see quotation from him on a previous page in this section); but he had the ability to be helpful to many in arriving at a livable philosophy for their daily needs. He conducted a newspaper column which had a circulation running into the millions. Often the object of attack because of his modernism, he nevertheless was unfailing in preserving his good humor, and in dealing with his critics in a keenly analytical and incisive manner. As an exponent of modernism, he was tremendously effective in promoting that point of view. His deep sympathy for

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the underprivileged won him thousands of followers and sympathizers, even among those who were wholly unable to follow him in his theological wanderings and speculations. When he died, modernism lost its greatest champion of his day; and the radio lost one of its most effective voices. His preaching was concerned almost exclusively with living in the "here and now"; if he was not wholly unconcerned about the future state of the soul, he was at least almost wholly noncommunicative about it. Heaven and hell to him were simply ideas which the race had developed through its long evolution in the field of religion.

Dr. Cadman seems to have set the stage for a new trend in preaching—that is in laying the emphasis on the life we now have rather than on any life which may follow hereafter. To that school of thought, immortal life is comprehended more by the term "quality" than by the term "quantity"; that is, the significant thing is the kind of life that is lived in this world, not the kind or length of life which shall follow after death removes us from this life. Specifically, Dr. Cadman, Dr. Fosdick, and others of the modernist persuasion would deny such indictments; practically, however, their sermons and their writings give considerable ground for believing their concern more "this worldly" than "other worldly." While they seek to disavow the consequences of their modernism, and deplore the tendency of this generation to minimize the future life, they seem not to be aware that it is their own modernistic teaching, and their own insistence on the importance of this present life which has contributed largely to the creation of this atmosphere. Whereas preachers of an earlier generation were deeply concerned about heaven and hell, accepting these realities as the most significant facts with which mortal man had to do, modernist preachers are inclined pretty much toward ignoring the whole realm of eschatology.

To be sure there are occasional exceptions. Even Dr. Fosdick himself wrote a book ("The Assurance of Immortality") in which he set forth in a rather excellent manner the case for a belief in life to come. Theoretically he is convinced, it seems, that such a life is both possible and probable; actually, his ordinary preaching from week to week makes little reference to it. Quite unconsciously he sets forth the fruit of modernism in the very first paragraphs of this book:

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"One of the most noticeable contrasts between this generation and those immediately preceding it, is the relative unimportance of the future life in the thought of the present ago. When our forefathers were at all religious, and often when they were not, they not only took for granted the fact of a continued existence beyond the grave, but they regarded it as a matter of supreme concern. When in the eighteenth century Butler constructed his impressive argument for revealed religion, he used the soul's deathlessness, not as a conclusion to be established, but as a premise to be assumed. Even with radical thinkers outside the churches, faith in the future life could then be presupposed as a common point of agreement, while within the churches, men's hopes and fears of immortality dominated their religious thought, and made this present life significant largely because it was preparatory to the glories or terrors of the life to come.

"Our fathers, therefore, hardly could have understood the present generation's scepticism about the truth of Immortality; much less could they have comprehended that modern nonchalance which speaks and acts as though it made little or no difference whether or not men live beyond the grave. A recent writer tells us that in our unwillingness to die and have that the end of us, 'We have not passed far beyond the attitude of peevish children who refuse to come in at nightfall after they have played outdoors all day.' This earlier belittling of the significance of life to come is prevalent today even among religious men. They do not so much disbelieve in immortality; their scepticism lies deeper; they do not care. With some such phrase as 'One world at a time,' they commonly dismiss consideration of the future life, regarding immortality indeed as a possibility, but a possibility whose import is postponed until they die" (Assurance of Immortality, pages 1 and 2).

In keeping with the tendency toward giving first importance to the problems of our immediate daily affairs has been the increasing number of "political" preachers. The Catholic Church has produced two most shining examples of this type of popular preaching—Charles E. Coughlin of Detroit and Fulton J. Sheen of Washington, D. C. These men, especially Coughlin, should be classed more in the field of political commentators than as preachers. ' Taking some of the hottest controversial questions of the day, they throw themselves eloquently into the fray. On one side or the other, they use all the persuasiveness and power at their com-

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mand to sway their hearers to a like opinion. It is the exception rather than the rule in one of these broadcasts for any reference whatsoever, other than a merely perfunctory one, to be made to Jesus Christ, God, the Bible, or Christianity. In this respect, they differ markedly from the political preaching of past generations—e.g., the pro — and anti-slavery preaching of the Civil War period—in that political preachers made copious quotations from the Bible text seeking to prove their points by the weight and number of passages which they could cite.

While the Catholic Church has produced, perhaps, the two outstanding modern examples of political preachers, she has by no means been alone in this type of preaching. Denominational churches in all parts of the nation have contributed to the general trend in that direction. Any Saturday afternoon newspaper will have a dozen different political themes listed among its "Sermon Topics." Some of these themes are obviously put out as "bait" to trap the curious; others deal quite seriously with the political questions of the hour, seeking to analyze the factors that influence law making bodies and peoples in one direction or the other, and trying to lead the congregations into what the preacher considers to be the proper attitude and action under the circumstances.

All preaching of this sort, both Catholic and Protestant—with an occasional gospel preacher also guilty—is primarily concerned with the things of this world. Food, clothing, shelter, labor laws, and race relationships, taxes, banking laws and insurance, are the meat and bone of their considerations. They become obsessed often with the idea of a "social gospel," and hope to produce by laws and regulations the society upon the earth which Christ promised for those who attain heaven. Their listeners are urged to vote for this or that piece of legislation; to write letters to such and such a public figure, demanding specific action from him to further a cherished cause. The cause may be a worthy one, or it may be merely a political football; but when the preachers become warmed up over it, it assumes all the importance of a Holy Crusade. Some of the larger churches, in keeping with this attitude, have even maintained propaganda agencies which were little different from the political lobbies of business corporations and labor unions, e.g., the well-known "Board of Temperance" of the Methodist Church. Bishop James Cannon, Jr., became a nationally known figure through this board in behalf of the prohibition laws. He made the



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headlines of the metropolitan press almost as regularly as prizefighters, movie stars and gangsters

The General Assemblies, Conferences, Conventions and other constituted bodies of the greater denominations have all reflected this pre-occupation with the questions of the hour. Nearly every legislative problem facing the law-making bodies of the nation will sooner or later find its way into the deliberations of the denominational assemblies. Profound discussions have taken place, resolutions have been passed, and whenever possible action has followed on all these varied issues. Such things as Britain's rule in India, Hitler's proscription of the Jews, the United States' selling oil and scrap iron to Japan, prohibition, pacificism, the Atlantic Charter and a myriad of comparable topics have occupied the attention of these August bodies.

All of it is in keeping with the general trend of denominational preaching: a profound preoccupation with the business of this present world, with only token references now and then to the traditionally great themes of Christian thought—sin, the atonement, and immortality.

## LITURGICAL TREND

There has been developing also a distinct and definite trend toward liturgical worship, and away from the more free and informal services commonly known in the past. Catholicism, of course, has always placed emphasis on liturgy and formal ritualism rather than on preaching. In fact, preaching has been so little regarded in the Catholic tradition that it has not even bothered to translate the homilies of the past out of the Latin, but still repeats the meaningless phrases hundreds of years after the worshipers have lost all comprehension of the meaning of these syllables. It would seem that they incline to attach some mystical or magical potency to the tone and utterance of certain sounds, regardless of whether anyone at all in the audience has an intelligent understanding of the ancient phrases or not. The Protestant churches, on the other hand, have traditionally given considerable emphasis to the sermon. The whole worship service in the past was built around the sermon. It was the center and focal point of all the meeting. This lent an importance to preaching and a distinction to the preacher which encouraged the development of the highest type of homiletical talent. Brilliant thinkers and profound students

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were attracted to the pulpit where they could give full play to their natural abilities. Whereas Catholicism with its routine liturgies offered little or no opportunity for the development of original thinking, Protestantism provided the widest sort of possibilities for the man whose intellect chafed at the strait-jacket of rigid and unyielding forms of thought and worship.

The results of this difference in emphasis have been easily apparent in the dearth of really great preachers among Catholics. Since the time of the Protestant Reformation, with a few notable exceptions, there has been no real contribution to the world of preaching from within the Catholic Church. There have been outstanding scholars and thinkers in Catholicism, but they have not been found swaying the multitudes from their pulpits in the manner of Phillips Brooks, Henry Ward Beecher, or Chas. H. Spurgeon. Whatever influence the Catholic leaders exerted would be through their writing and through their schools, rather than through their pulpits.

Today, however, with the pageantry and ritualism of Catholicism finding an increasingly ready acceptance among Protestants, it may well be that the high standard of preaching once found in the greater denominations will tend to disappear. Signs that such a decline is already in process would not be hard to produce. To be sure, there is a certain weight to be given to the influence and impact of our materialistic age on the pulpit. But we believe there are other factors also at work, which are of a more insidious nature. And these factors will eventually bring down the level of Protestant preaching to the same inconsequential place it occupies in Catholicism.

Whereas theological seminaries a few decades ago were known as places where students were taught to *preach*, they are now regarded as technical training schools in which the students are instructed in the art of administering the affairs of a congregation. The old emphasis on preaching is waning; the new emphasis is on the thousand and one details that go into the life of a modern, well organized, smooth-running, denominational church. Among other courses, nearly all the denominational seminaries are now offering courses in the pageantry of public worship-instruction in how to put across a beautiful and moving spectacle in the worship services. Organ music, processions and recessions, robed choristers and clergymen, responsive readings and prayers, antiphonal

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singing by different choirs, and innumerable other items have added immensely to the items found in the usual Protestant program of worship. Little place is left for, and little importance given to, the sermon. Indeed, it is not at all uncommon for the sermon to be omitted altogether from a Sunday morning service. The preacher is a producer of a pageant-not the proclaimer of a message. His services are to impress the worshiper, not to magnify the name of God by his teaching.

Some of the more liberal of the Protestant churches have gone into this sort of activity with a free hand to give full play to their theatrical and imaginative proclivities. Unrestrained by creed or tradition, they have produced spectacles which have all the atmosphere and dramaturgy of the stage. The aim frankly is to create an impression on the audience, to play upon their emotions and to bring them to the desired intensity of feeling and awe. There is certainly not the common simplicity of a congregation of people worshipping together; there is not the earnest, eager listening to hear and accept the revelation of God's word as a preacher of the gospel expounds it. But one gets the feeling that an effort is being made to touch the audience rather than to touch God. Music, lights, incense, decorations and colorings, together with all the items on the program, have a well defined "earthy" effect, and God seems only an ethereal stage property.

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There are certain themes which modern denominational preaching almost completely ignores. One of the most conspicuous of these (conspicuous by its absence) is the sinfulness of man. The preachers have not been unaffected by the foolish optimism of the evolutionary hypothesis. They have imbibed the spirit of inevitable and inescapable progress toward a better and brighter world. They have felt that since the whole world is in a ferment of development and growth, it would be childish to become critical of man's shortcomings and impatient with his imperfections. Sin should be regarded merely as undevelopment. With time and understanding it will correct itself. In fact, most of what our forefathers called "sin" was but the maladjustment socially of people who were more sinned against than sinning. Poverty and mental distresses of a psychiatric nature and social injustices were the real problem—not man's perverseness of heart and unregenerate nature. The old

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preaching which emphasized man's alienation from God, and painted in lurid colors the depravity which had seized him was melodramatic and misinformed, as well as misleading. The previous generations did not understand the workings of the human mind as do the moderns. They had to interpret things in the light of their unenlightened age. So they spoke of sin as though it were hideous and terrible; they worked on the emotions of the people adversely, producing a craven, whimpering, cowardly fear of God as one who was wrathful and revengeful in his hatred of the sinner.

The modern approach to sin is that it is to be treated as a disease, rather than as a perversion of the heart. If the man who thinks of himself as a sinner is to be helped, he must be shown that he is only hindering and stunting his personality by these feelings of inferiority and unworthiness; he must stand up on his feet and assert himself. YIN these songs of a previous age which emphasized the sinfulness of man are falling into disuse, and are being forgotten. Man is not a "worm of the dust" and should not think of himself as such.

Of course, if sin is to be minimized, it also becomes necessary to de-emphasize the importance the atonement has always held in Christian thought. This has been done by preaching of the atonement as a moral example—a man dying for his convictions, rather than a man dying to redeem a sinful world. All the drama and pathos and tragedy of the cross they have tried to retain; the only thing they have desired to remove was its significance and meaning. As historically presented, the cross has always high-lighted the rebellious and sinful nature of humanity; it has shown the blackness and depravity of the human heart; it has been a terrible indictment of the whole race. That presentation of it must not be allowed to stand. But it would be impossible to retain anything even resembling Christianity without the cross; hence the necessity of stressing certain things about the event, while ignoring and disregarding the total signification of it.

In line with this general policy of gradually blotting out the distinct lines of accepted Christian dogma has been the increasing reluctance to preach on any of the positive requirements of the gospel of Christ. The whole thing is presented rather vaguely; it is a spidery web of gossamer filaments, showing in brief interludes a faint trace of the ancient gospel here and there, but on the whole

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the thing heard from most denominational pulpits today bears little resemblance even to what those same pulpits would have produced fifty years ago. Such once familiar phrases as "plan of salvation" and "scheme of redemption" need to be explained to the modern churchgoer. They have a strange and alien sound to his ears. He doesn't comprehend what one is talking about, nor can he understand why there should be any such commotion over more theological disputations.

Such themes as baptism, remission of sins, covenant relationship with God, the work of the Holy Spirit in conviction and conversion, seem dull and academic to the modern denominational churchgoer. He has been schooled away from these fundamentals of the faith; he has been fed a diet of pulpit pabulum so long he is incapable of receiving or digesting anything heavier until his system has been reconditioned. Fed on the sensational tid-bits of light and frothy philosophy, he will choke if given the solid meat of Bible preaching.

## MEETING THE NEED

It is evident to students of the religious situation of our day that the Church of Christ faces one of her greatest challenges and one of her greatest opportunities in the present hour. Perhaps at no time in the last hundred years has there been so great a moment, and one so fraught with possibilities both for disaster and for success. If devout and thoughtful men rise to the occasion, we will have reason to anticipate a resurgence of the evangelistic fervor of the early days of the Restoration movement. If, on the other hand, there is no realization of our problems and their attendant opportunities, we are surely facing the danger of diminishing returns in future years for all the labor we put out.

It should be clear that here in America we face two distinct types of audiences. Or rather, in every audience there are likely to be two distinct attitudes or types of thinking represented. One is the agnostic, atheistic, skeptical type. This type is present in religious services, being represented by the modernistic philosophy of religion. It is a mentality which hungers basically for some sort of religion, but which has been so confused and befuddled by the "higher critics" and has been so bewildered by the philosophies of the great universities that it is incapable of any coherent thought on the eternal verities of our faith. It puts a question mark after

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every statement. It is doubtful about every assertion. It has nothing positive at all on which to build a hope or a life, but it still cannot accept the old thinking and the old formulations of truth. Usually such a soul is either cynical or is pessimistic—often both. He is cynical because he sees so many of his fellows continuing to repeat the old phrases, and continuing to believe the doctrines which he has "outgrown." He is pessimistic and gloomy because he cannot at all be certain of the worthwhileness of any of the things with which religion has to do. He cannot have any high faith or hopeful courage for the future of the church, of the race, or of the world. He simply doesn't know. But he faces whatever future there may be with considerable uncertainty and misgivings.

The other attitude likely to be present would be represented by those who have not surrendered faith in the validity and inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures. Of course, here one is likely to find every kind and degree of doctrinal bias and background—from the crudest sort of literalism seen in the premillenarians to the full and ardent devotion to truth found in the well-informed member of the body of Christ. Between the two extremes there are literally millions of people who have a certain heritage of religious faith, and who are capable of being won to a complete and undenominational acceptance of the gospel of Christ. In all the larger denominations the bulk of the membership are still uninformed in matters of religion. They go to church and to Sunday School, they listen to their preachers, and consider themselves as good Christians; but concerning the vital issues confronting the church and the world today, they have very little information indeed. In spite of the modernism of their pastors, they still have a belief in the Bible as having come from God, and they still hold to a good portion of the faith which their forefathers handed down to them. In most of them, to be sure, it is more the result of unthinking acceptance of the accumulated traditions of the past than it is a vital and living faith. But at least it has not been totally obscured and submerged by the growing tide of skepticism which has filled their pulpits.

The gospel preacher of today, to fulfill his highest mission and to realize his greatest possibilities, must be cognizant of the sort of audience to which he is preaching, and must study to present the message of God's word in a way within the grasp and interest of

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his hearers. It would be absurd to seek to interest a skeptic or an agnostic in some particular interpretation of something Paul might have written. As likely as not he would be perfectly willing to concede that the interpretation suggested is exactly what the words of the text declare; but he thinks it is not relevant to anything with which we are concerned today. He questions the authority of what Paul and Christ taught, not that the Bible itself gives a true version of their teachings. He wonders about the validity and the pertinency of the whole Christian religion as it affects our contemporary living.

What is being said here is certainly true of American churchgoers. It may, or may not, be true in other countries. There is good ground for believing that our missionary efforts in other countries have been largely unfruitful and unavailing because of our failure to understand and comprehend the civilizations with which we have dealt. With a few outstanding exceptions, the missionaries who have been sent out by the Churches of Christ have not been men who were conspicuously successful here at home; and the same mediocrity has plagued their efforts in foreign fields. Lacking the ability in their preaching to be particularly effective with the American audiences they have not shown any better results with foreign audiences. They have been devoutly earnest, and perhaps their presence on a foreign field would indicate that they had been more sinned against than sinning. Their churches who sent them should have exercised greater care in selecting them for such a task. The doctrinally weak and uncertain ones should have been kept at home where they could have received instruction, rather than attempting to give it.

Any effort at a serious consideration of preaching today, however, must give some thought to the type of audience which is to be reached in foreign countries. For there will undoubtedly be an upward surge in the number of those desiring to preach in foreign places when world conditions again make it possible. There will be a great responsibility on the churches to see to it that any new endeavors in the missionary fields are not cursed by control of the premillennialists, and are not so inept in the personnel sent forth as to insure for them the same tragic failures so obvious in the past. Surely as careful study must be given to the people of the country to be reached as is given to the message which is to be given them.

In foreign countries, as well as in America, the preacher must

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be supremely concerned about *preaching to the needs of the people*. If the diagnosis of the general types of audiences be correct, then there must follow two distinct kinds of preaching.

### TYPES OF PREACHING

First, there must be preaching of an apologetic nature. For the sake of the honest skeptics and agnostic, as well as for the man who has been made uncertain by the modernists must this be done. It is also necessary for a vast multitude of people whose faith so far is still intact, but who will undoubtedly sooner or later have to face the attacks of unbelievers. This is especially true of youth, and in a particular sense, of those young people who will enter the universities of the nation. In most of the great centers of learning there is a definite and purposeful effort put forth to weaken, if not to destroy, the basic beliefs which are the foundation of Christianity. Young people who are immature in their mental development are brought into conflict with the shrewdest and sharpest intellects in the community. The beliefs on which their whole religious life has been built are brought under merciless attack. The arguments which they, in their unprepared condition, attempt to advance in favor of Christianity are such as their professor has met a hundred times before from other earnest, but ill-equipped students. All the weight and authority and scholarly prestige at his command are brought to bear to crush the defense made. The student is made to appear ridiculous and laughable to be holding on to the old mythologies and traditions of a long since discredited superstition. Perhaps he will bitterly resent the attack made on his faith, and will reject it without knowing exactly why he does so. But his morale will have been shaken; he will have been confused and bewildered, if not definitely weakened, in his faith. And the multitude of those whose faith can never recover from such an onslaught is alarming because of its very proportions. ,

The gospel preacher must be prepared, both intellectually and emotionally, to deal with this problem. If he is to preach to the needs of his generation, he will necessarily have to do some deep research in the field of Christian evidences; and must train himself to deal helpfully and understandingly with the problems of those whose hearts are torn between desire on the one hand to believe, and what seems to them often, on the other hand, the overwhelming argument against belief. The preacher's "chief intel-



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lectual qualification must be the power clearly and comprehensively to conceive, and accurately and powerfully to express, the truth." His chief emotional qualification surely must be a sympathetic understanding of the problems of his fellow-men, and an unquenchable desire to help them by leading them to the One who alone can truly help. However great may be his knowledge of the truth, and however clearly he may be able to expose and refute the sophisms and intellectual inanities of the arrogant, he must still realize that the chief end he has in view is the salvation of some soul who is tormented and distressed by doubt and uncertainty, not the mere exposure of some half-baked pseudo-scientist's wild speculations. Or, perhaps, better still, his aim is to guard some fine boy and girl from the traps and snares which might engulf them in the destruction of atheism.

This end cannot be achieved without a thorough preparation in the field where the conflict is pitched—the field of apologetics. There is a boundless accumulation of material in this field, beginning historically from the very day the men of inspiration were called upon to refute some gnostic or agnostic, some Bar-Jesus or Nicolas. Much of the sacred Scriptures was given for the very purpose of producing faith in the things divine (John 20:30). But outside the realm of inspired writings there is still a vast wealth of material at the preacher's command. If he is a close student he will find that the old arguments against Christianity tend to produce themselves over and over in every generation. They assume different guises; they come in different terminology, and under different forms, but basically they are the SAME. There has been little new, in principle, in the artillery of atheism for at least a thousand years. The vaporings of an Ingersoll or a Paine are but a re-hash of Celsus, Porphyry, and others of the early opponent of Christianity whose charges have long since been met and refuted. Yet in spite of this each succeeding generation of unbelievers dresses up the old arguments in new clothes and puts them out on parade again. The preacher who is familiar with the history of the past will have little difficulty in showing the fallacy and weakness of most of the popular arguments which the opponents of Christianity can produce.

From the days of the apostles to the present time, the keenest intellects of each generation have brought their powers to bear on the eternal question of the verity of Christianity. The result has

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been some of the most brilliant and irrefutable evidences of the truth of the Christian system from every field of human thought, from philosophy, theology, biology, geology, anthropology, psychology, and even philology and astronomy. There is no science which has not become the handmaiden of the truth of our religion; there is no branch of learning which has not brought its contribution ultimately to the accumulating mass of evidence which is overwhelming in its size and in its worth. It would be utterly impossible for any one man in any single lifetime to read, much less assimilate, all the information the Written documents have preserved. At best he can hope only to read the best and that which has been most clearly demonstrated to be practicable and useful in refuting the unbelievers, and in confirming the believers in their faith.

For the average student, one of the best all-purpose books in the field of Christian Evidences is "The Divine Demonstration," published in 1884 by H. W. Everest. This gives a comprehensive view of the whole field, and points out rather briefly some of the main lines of thought in approaching the question. Of course, it is simply taken for granted that any gospel preacher will familiarize himself with the monumental work of Alexander Campbell, and will pay particular attention to the "Campbell-Owen Debate." Generally speaking, it will be found that the writers of the Restoration period were better prepared to handle the philosophical defense of Christianity than are most modern writers. They show a depth of insight, a profundity of perception which is rarely met with today. And since the philosophical objections to Christianity are no different today from those advanced hundreds of years ago, the Restoration literature will prove to be by far the most profitable reading in this particular field. In this connection, particular attention might be called to J. W. McGarvey's classical work on Christian Evidences. This is not light reading, but neither is the subject a frivolous one. Here, as everywhere, the student who really studies will be richly repaid.

If one is to go outside the immediate field of the church, he will find numerous helpful works among sectarian and denominational (even Catholic) scholars. Any recognized work on Systematic Theology will have a section devoted to Christian evidences. One of the most clearly stated, and one which is organized in such a way as to be easily accessible to the average preacher is

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"Systematic Theology" by A. H. Strong. It will be found that very rich material is usually contained in the "lectures" which are delivered in the world's great universities on endowments which have been left for that purpose. Among these, the Bampton Lectures, delivered at Oxford, England, have been some of the best. In America we have the Yale, Sprunt, Hibbert, Cole, and perhaps a dozen others which are well-recognized series of lectures. The men who gave these lectures were chosen because of their scholarly qualifications; they spent long and careful hours in meticulous preparation for their particular tasks, and their published volumes provide some of the finest reading obtainable in this field.

A constant stream of modern books continues to come from the press. Among conservative scholars of recent years there have been few equal to Dr. Melvin Grove Kyle, who revised the great International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, originally edited by Dr. James Orr of Scotland. Before his death, Dr. Kyle wrote a number of books on the archaeology of the Holy Land. (He was an archaeologist of world renown, and lived in Palestine, doing research there for about forty years.) Any of his books which are available will be invaluable in the information they give concerning the indisputable proofs of Christianity which have been uncovered with the spade. Another modern scientist of the "popular" variety is Dr. Harry Rimmer. He writes in a breezy, sometimes rather flippant style, which often rather detracts from the weight of what he says; but as a scientist of unquestioned ability, he has made a considerable contribution to the field of Christian apologetics. As a scientist, he can be trusted to deal accurately and scientifically with the facts which he handles. His series of books are familiar to most gospel preachers, and are valuable to them. The fact that he has missed the mark as a theologian, and has become confused and befuddled in the delusions of premillennialism, should not detract from the worth of his work as a scientist. He is undoubtedly an authority in that field, however hopelessly at sea he may be as a theologian or politician or preacher.

The second general area of preaching will deal not so much with apologetics as it will with presenting the truth to people who do not question the integrity and inspiration of the Bible. To this group, undoubtedly, the greater portion of a preacher's ministry should be dedicated. If for no other reason, simply because the greater part of his audience will be composed of these people. Their

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needs are very real, just as real as are the needs of the honest doubter, but they are to be met in a much different manner.

There has grown up a prejudice, especially among the modernists, against preaching of the Bible as "The Book." Their custom is to use it only as a sort of source book for homiletical material, while most of the time spent in preaching a sermon is devoted to dealing with some popular question or current theme. Harry Emerson Fosdick, twenty years ago, set forth this approach rather lucidly. He said, "Any preacher who even with moderate skill is helping folks to solve their real problems is functioning. He never will lack an audience. He may have neither eloquence nor learning, but he is doing the one thing that is a preacher's business.

"Many preachers indulge habitually in what they call expository sermons. They take a passage from the Scripture and, proceeding on the assumption that the people attending church that morning are deeply concerned about what the passage means, they spend their time in a historical exposition, ending with some appended practical application to the auditors. Could any procedure be more surely predestined to dullness and futility? Every agency dealing with the public recognizes that contact with the actual life of the auditor is the one place to begin if his interest is desired. Only the preacher proceeds still upon the idea that folk come to church desperately anxious to discover what happened to the Jebusites!" (Bowing the Preacher Out of Politics, page 118, a quotation).

What Dr. Fosdick failed to grasp is that in preaching the Bible, a man is making "contact with the actual life of the auditor." He is doing the very thing that Dr. Fosdick felt should be done, but instead of doing it in some haphazard, hit or miss method, he is relying on the accumulated wisdom of the ages, plus an inspired record of the race, to guide him into the correct solution of mankind's infinite variety of situations and problems. For the Bible deals with those phases of a man's life which do not change from generation to generation. His temptations today are no different from those faced by Adam or Moses or Paul. His hopes and fears, his aspirations and ambitions are not likely to change from one generation to another. This is the very reason the Bible has been able to retain its vitality over thousands of years. It deals with the constant, unvarying problems that every man in every generation has to face, and for which he has to seek some satis-

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factory solution—the fact of God, sin, death, and eternity. If the Jebusites faced those same problems (and they did), then it certainly is not to be thought something strange that folk will come to church "desperately anxious to discover" how they solved these problems, or how they made mistakes which prevented their finding a solution to them. If a sufficiently informed preacher of the gospel is handling the subject, and if he has imagination enough and language enough to present the Jebusites graphically and realistically, then their problem can have considerable interest for the people of this day, for their problem is our problem, too.

It is evident that men are more and more learning the worth of simple preaching of the Bible itself from the increasing number of books that come from the press pleading for an emphasis on "Bible" preaching. Some call this expository preaching. One of the latest of these is Andrew W. Blackwood's "Preaching from the Bible." In his foreword he says, "'Where can we find a minister who knows how to preach from the Bible?' This question comes from the chairman of a committee in quest of a pastor. 'Our people loved our former minister, but they soon grew weary of his sermons. Every year, after the first few weeks in the fall, he seemed to be all preached out.' Doubtless such laymen are unduly critical. Perhaps they have kept their pastor so busy about many things that they have left him little time to think about the Bible or the art of preaching. The fact remains that many of our strongest laymen would relish at least one inspiring biblical message every Lord's Day. Surely they have a right to insist that their minister should know how to prepare and deliver such strong, gripping sermons."

This book is typical of a veritable flood of literature in the last few years to the same intent. The "applied psychology" of the modernists has not been sufficient to satisfy the hunger of those who come to church in quest of spiritual food. They long for the voice of authority. They desire to hear words that have not only been tested in the crucible of human history, but more important, have come down from heaven itself. It was because Jesus taught "as one having authority" that the people listened so raptly to what he offered. There is a deep-seated and ineradicable feeling of uncertainty and inadequacy in the human race. After all his high-sounding boasts have been uttered, he is still like a helpless child lost in the dark. He instinctively yearns to reach out his groping hands in the night and feel the reassuring touch of One who is not

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lost or helpless or uncertain. He wants to hear from one who *knows*.

The only answer there can ever be to that hunger must be—God. For that reason, any book, no matter how inferior and puerile, which claims for itself to have come from God, is bound to command a considerable respect. And when it is truly preached, people will come to church "desperately anxious to discover" whatever it may have to say. The implications in this situation are clear and inescapable for the preacher of the gospel. His greatest contribution to the happiness of humanity, as well as to the progress of the kingdom, must be in his doing the very thing his title suggests—preaching the gospel. The emphasis must always be on what the Bible teaches, not on any effort to solve or unravel any particular social problem of the hour, apart from Bible teaching. In the course of a faithful ministry of preaching the Bible itself, the preacher will touch upon every problem that confronts the race. The truths which applied to the "Jebusites" apply also to the people today. And, of course, the gospel of Christ is the eternal answer for all of man's needs. Even Dr. Fosdick himself, for all of his belittling of biblical preaching, is forced to recognize the preeminence of Christ, and to realize how futile would be any preaching which ignored him. "I have preached Christ many users," he says, "yet I have never marveled as I do today how right he eternally is" (Quoted in "Church Management," Vol. 21, page 7).

## BIBLICAL PREACHING IN HISTORY

It is evident from a study of church history that the great periods in religious growth were times when the preachers were pre-eminently *Bible* preachers. However faulty at times may have been their interpretation and handling of the text, they nevertheless gave the actual text of the Scriptures a place of supreme emphasis in their teaching. It is also historically true that every great apostasy in Christendom has been preceded by a marked decline in Biblical preaching and evangelistic fervor. Scarcely had the apostles died when inertia overtook the church, and the deadly leaven of apostasy began to do its work. For three hundred years there was very little preaching worthy of the name.

Then for a brief period there came the revival of the fourth century. Commenting on the characteristics of the preaching of this era, Dargan says, "Preaching is largely exposition of Scripture,

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often on a short text, sometimes continuous on whole books, or on subjects. Doctrine also becomes now increasingly important as homiletical material . . . " (History of Preaching, page 70). Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa (younger brother of Basil) and John Chrysostom were the outstanding preachers of this period. Their sermons which are extant, especially those of Chrysostom, are almost like commentaries in their Biblical content. Here is solid expository preaching—none of the seeking after sensational tid-bits to tickle the palates of sermon-tasting dilettantes. Had Chrysostom had successors of his own caliber to continue the work, it is not at all unthinkable that the great apostasy into Catholicism might have been averted.

Following the death of Chrysostom, and his immediate group, the period of Biblical preaching entered into a swift eclipse. For nearly eight hundred years there was only a brief and feeble voice of any power or weight to be heard now and then. The church had entered the dark ages; Catholicism ruled the world. The confusion and chaos accompanying the rise of the papal power successfully drowned out any effective pulpit preaching that might have been done.

With the twelfth century came the heralds of the dawn, the dawn of a new day in preaching and in religion. It wasn't time for the Reformation, not by three hundred years. But the work of Luther would have been impossible had it not been for the preparation made by such men as Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1136), Peter Abelard (d. 1142), Thomas Aquinas (1227-1274), and Francis of Assisi (1182-1226). These men, in spite of the binding shackles of Catholicism, were able to see dimly what Luther saw more fully—that Catholicism as then practiced was morally degrading, intellectually stifling, and spiritually intolerable. The sermons they preached, while far inferior to those of Chrysostom, who preceded them, and to Luther and his contemporaries who followed them, were tremendously effective in their influence upon the people of their own generation. The sermons of these men were overwhelmingly Biblical in content and evangelistic in tone. Under such preaching, a religious enthusiasm swept the world, culminating, to be sure, in the misguided Crusades. Nevertheless, preaching attained a prestige and an influence which it had not enjoyed for eight hundred years. Martin Luther and the preachers of the Protestant Reformation

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gave a supreme importance to the preaching of the Bible as such. John Calvin, John Knox, Melancthon, Zwingli" all of these believed that it was by preaching the very text of the Scripture itself that the will of God could be revealed to mankind and the problems of both the individual and the church could best be met. They dealt not with their immediate petty affairs; they dealt with the eternal problems of the race. And in doing so, they found the Bible was the one book in all the world which could speak with authority on these questions.

### PREACHING FOR A VERDICT

If gospel preaching is to be effective in a denominational world, there are certain prerequisites which must be found in the gospel preacher. One of the most basic of these is that he shall assume that all his auditors are as honest, sincere, and as desirous of having the truth as is he. Of course, that may not always be so. In fact, it quite often will not be; but the preacher can never know for sure what the attitude of his hearers is, and his only recourse is to assume that it is so always. He may find this pays dividends even when he has good reason to be suspicious of the good faith and integrity of his hearers. When men know that they are assumed to be honest, they often strive to live up to the assumption, even though their original state of mind might have been far from honest.

It will be necessary for the preacher to distinguish between the two classes of his hearers—the honestly ignorant and the dishonestly ignorant. The former class can be taught the truth. They are much like the people to whom Peter preached on Pentecost, who had crucified the Savior "in ignorance." They simply did not know on that tragic day what they were doing. Myriads of people today are in the same abysmal ignorance as concerns spiritual matters. Steeped in the traditions and prejudices of their foreparents, they are all but incapable of comprehending, much less accepting, a different point of view. However, their honest attitude can be their salvation. Once made fully to realize the truth, they can be brought to accept it. The other class, however, is not so. They are equally ignorant, but they are also of such a nature as to reject everything that might change that condition. They will not listen to a different idea or interpretation. They are so certain of the rightness of their views that they live in a mental



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vacuum, from which they have excluded every single bit of information or factual demonstration which does not coincide with their preconceived ideas of the way things ought to be.

Many gospel preachers are perplexed at times as to whether they shall call the names of denominational groups in their pulpit preaching. There are varying opinions on the matter. Some men simply cannot preach without calling out the names of the denominational groups whose errors they are attempting to correct. In a former generation this was far more common than it is today. The well-known Negro preacher, Marshall Keeble, is a fine example of how effective this type of preaching can be when it is used to the right audience and under the right circumstances. He uses all the wit with which he has been endowed in lampooning these false doctrines, calling them by name and holding them up to ridicule and derision. He has been tremendously effective in turning hundreds of people away from these errors and baptizing them into the body of Christ. On the other hand, there have undoubtedly been gospel preachers who made the wrong use of that kind of preaching. Instead of converting people from the error of their way, they have served only to confirm them in it, and have turned them away from the services with a cold and furious determination never again to attend such a meeting. In which case, the preacher defeated the very aim of his preaching. Instead of winning a man from error, he has confirmed him in it. Perhaps the very fact that he is preaching for a verdict should be the guiding principle in all a preacher's work. He wants action on what he teaches; he wants acceptance of it. He will do everything in his power to present the truth so effectively and so clearly that all who hear may understand it, and may be moved to obey that truth. If by calling the names of the various denominations represented in his audience he can more easily show the error of their teachings, and can more readily persuade people to leave them, then he will have no hesitancy in designating them. If there are circumstances when he realizes there is no useful purpose to be served by such procedure, he will make no reference to them by name.

Some modern writers, e.g., Phelan's "HANDBOOK of the Smaller Religious Denominations," have pathetically misunderstood the Church of Christ in her relationship to the denominational world. This has led to a feeling of sharp criticism against the church,

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and to charges that she is narrow and sectarian and obscurantist in her outlook. Particularly in her refusal to cooperate with denominational bodies and in her persistent efforts to "proselyte" members from these groups. They have thought that the Church of Christ was acting with the highest and most flagrant disregard of ethics and brotherly courtesy when she frankly set out to win people away from Methodism or Presbyterianism or other religious denominations and persuade them to become members of the Church of Christ. It has been their contention that all denominations are Christian; and that no effort at all should be made to persuade any man to "change his religion" in quitting one denomination and becoming affiliated with another.

What they have failed to understand completely is that the Church of Christ is not a "sister" denomination. Gospel preachers do not have the same fellow-feeling for denomination preachers that these preachers have for one another, for the gulf between truth and error in these matters is too wide to be bridged. A man's membership in a Methodist or Baptist or Lutheran church simply has no relevancy in the matter of his acceptance to God. As a matter of practical concern it would probably be much better if he were not connected in any way with these organizations. For such a connection is very likely to give him a sense of security which is based on a false premise. His "belonging to a church" will probably do much to make him indifferent to the claims of the gospel of Christ, and will blind his eyes to the truth. As far as obedience to the gospel is concerned, a man's being a Methodist has no more significance than his being a vegetarian or being left-handed. In no sense is his being sprinkled in the Methodist Church equivalent to being "born again" into the kingdom of God.

In order to make this distinction clear and unmistakable, the gospel preacher today will find it necessary to do a considerable portion of what was once called "doctrinal" preaching. He must keep the distinctions between truth and error constantly before the people, not only the denominational world, but members of the Church as well. It is easy for them to become confused and weak in their convictions because of constant association with religious people of the world. Kindness must be always the spirit with which this is handled; but uncompromising firmness and undeviating devotion to principle must dominate the scene. The stakes are too high to admit of any sort of evasion or avoidance of the issues.

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M. C. Kurfees wrote a series of articles for the Gospel Advocate about twenty years ago which are now available in tract form. Every gospel preacher should read and weigh these carefully. Kurfees said, "We should not have error, in any form, mixed with truth; and hence, while we should always be considerate and respectful as well as kind and courteous in dealing with the propagators of error, we should, nevertheless, be careful to point out to them plainly and unmistakably what God says and whereinsoever denominationalism or anything else is a departure therefrom. This is one of the crying needs of the present hour. Not only is there today, with conflicting sects and sectarianism on every band, the 'urgent need for a reaffirmation of gospel cardinals,' but so long as there are sinners to save and people to be delivered from the confusion and entanglements of denominationalism, so long will it be necessary to preach the gospel of the Son of God in all its fullness" (The Need of Continued Emphasis on the Restoration of the Ancient Order, page 10).

The gospel preacher must resolutely and purposefully go about his task of winning people from denominational affiliations. He is rejoiced as much to win a man from the errors of Methodism as he is to win a man from the errors of Mohammedanism. He places all religions of man on the same basis. None of them can offer the sinner any hope whatsoever for a life with God beyond the grave. The truth must be preached to both, for the truth is the only hope any of us has for salvation.

## PART IV

*"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."—Mark 16:15, 16.*

*"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

*For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."—Rom. 1:16, 17.*

THE BIBLE IN PREACHING

By

Roy E. COGDILL

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# CHAPTER I

## PREACH THE WORD

The word of God should be both center and circumference of all preaching. Paul said to Timothy, "Preach the Word." This is the need of the world in this and every generation to come. It is all that will or can bless the souls of men. There are many high and holy reasons why this is true.

### GOD'S WILL REVEALED THEREIN

The Bible should be preached in all of the purity of its message for it is the revelation of God's will concerning man and God's way for man to be saved. The salvation of man is its very object. The purpose of divine revelation is that man may know the will of the Lord and do it. In Deut .29:29, we hear this declaration, "The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God: but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever that we may do all the words of the law." Here God has clearly stated his purpose in giving us the Bible. It could not more clearly state the importance of giving the Bible its proper place in preaching. The Bible is the revelation of God to man. It has been given that men may know and do the will of God, and these are the very reasons for preaching it. Likewise, they are reasons for preaching the Bible only for they are true of the Bible alone.

From the New Testament we hear a similar declaration by Paul, I Cor. 2:10, "But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." And again in verse 12, "But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth, combining spiritual things with spiritual words." Here our reason for preaching the Bible and only the Bible is clearly and definitely stated. It is the revelation of God's will made under the direction or by means of the Holy Spirit, and in

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words of God's own choosing. This means that it is the inerrant message of God that man might know the will of God. When the Bible is preached God's purpose is being thereby served. When something else is preached, God's purpose is being denied.

### THE ONLY MEANS OF SPIRITUAL LIGHT

The Bible must be preached for it is the only source of spiritual light. Aside from it there is no light but all is darkness in the spiritual realm. No other book or message can tell us anything about God, Christ and His place in human redemption, the Holy Spirit, heaven, angels, eternal life, the divine origin of life, the nature of man's soul, the destiny of the soul after death, sin, eternal punishment, the horrors of hell, or any related subject. Since the Bible is the only textbook on man and his relation to God it follows that every lesson on such a subject must be drawn directly from the word of God.

David declared, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105), and in verse 130 of the same Psalm, he adds, "The entrance of thy words giveth light."

In the first chapter of John's gospel we read, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. In him was LIFE: and *the life was the light of men.*' Again, "There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world."

Paul wrote to the Ephesians in these words, "Ye were once darkness, but now are light in the Lord: walk as children of light for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth, proving what is well pleasing unto the Lord" (Eph. 5:8-10).

On this point we cannot pass by II Corinthians 4:5, 6, "For we preach not ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake." Seeing it is God that said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," and "shined in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

From these and many more passages we get the contrast between revealed things as light, and unrevealed things as darkness. One represents truth and righteousness, and the other error and evil.

## HUMAN OR DIVINE WISDOM?

Revelation from God throws spiritual light upon the souls of men. When we preach the Bible we help shed forth that light but when any other message is preached the darkness is only the more pronounced.

## HUMAN OR DIVINE WISDOM?

The question as to what place in preaching shall the Bible be given can be resolved at once into this inquiry—which will benefit the souls of men, divine wisdom or human wisdom? If preaching is to bless the souls of men it must be Bible preaching and that means the preaching of the Bible just as God has given it to man. The Bible contains wisdom *that is from above* and it is the only medium through which men have access to the wisdom of God in all things spiritual. With God the wisdom of this world is foolishness in spiritual affairs (I Cor. 3:19).

Jeremiah cried, "O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself : it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). Surely, if man is unable to direct himself in religious affairs, he is unable to direct others. Jesus said, "If the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit" (Matt. 15:14). In this very statement Jesus was speaking of false teachers who were not satisfied to speak the message as God had given it.

The outstanding discussion of this very point in the entire Bible is found in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter one, verses 18 through 31. In this passage Paul emphasizes the absolute need of man for the wisdom of God. The Corinthians had exalted human wisdom, and had fallen victims to false teachers as the consequence. Instead of being primarily concerned as to the truth of the message preached, they gave more attention to the wonderful vocabulary of the speaker, and considered it an indication of wisdom. They likewise exalted the eloquence of the speaker and all other outward and carnal things, disregarding the important consideration of truth and its spiritual benefits. This is often the case in our own generation. The man who has the highest degree or rank educationally, or who speaks in the smoothest or most eloquent fashion, or uses the largest words, or who feigns the air of profound wisdom creates the greatest impression and receives the most consideration. Have you not heard the plea, "But why do so many highly educated people think otherwise?" And also the statement, "Dr. so and so, a great scholar, thinks



## PREACHING IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

thus and so." Many people are actually led by human opinion and a display of worldly wisdom to reject the simple truth of God's Book. Because of such an attitude, we find among preachers a mad scramble after human knowledge, when they are ignorant of the Word of God, having a consuming desire to preach with the words of man's wisdom, and to make a profound impression with their feigned knowledge and wisdom so that the public may be impressed and call them great preachers. The truly great preacher stands upon a "Thus saith the Lord," and his only appeal is "To the law and the testimony," and the only issue is, "What saith it, the word of faith which we preach?" Not what do I or some others think about it.

Paul taught that God purposely chose the things of this world that are foolish and simple in the eyes of men in order that men may be led to depend upon God and not upon themselves, "that no flesh should glory before the Lord."

Jesus said, "I thank thee, Father of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and hast revealed them unto babes" (Luke 10:21).

It does no, therefore, matter how great the man may be who gives his opinion, we need to say with Paul, "Let God be found true, but every man a liar." When men differ from what God has said in His Word, men are wrong, and God is right. When preaching teaches something contrary to the teaching of the Bible, that preaching is wrong and the Bible is right.

Divine testimony approves men who listen to preaching with the determination to test it by the Word of God before they accept what it teaches. Luke records concerning the Bereans, "Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." They checked and compared the preaching of the great Apostle Paul by the Word of God. We today should be willing to believe no man on earth for his own sake, but find ourselves in harmony with all men who preach and teach the Truth.

## THE STANDARD OF DIVINE AUTHORITY

The Bible is the standard of divine authority. It is God's law and beside it there is no other test, rule, principle, or standard

## THE STANDARD OF DIVINE AUTHORITY

by which to test the truth or man's obedience. God has spoken unto men in His Word that men may know his will and it is only by respect for God's word and reverence for God's will that man may be counted obedient in the sight of God. The object of preaching is to bring men unto God, obedient and faithful, that they might be saved. To this very end Jesus ordained that the Gospel should be preached, saying, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The Gospel is to be preached that men may know, believe, and obey the will of God. Then when something else besides the Word of God is preached, it can only result in confusion, a lack of faith, and disobedience. That is exactly the result of preaching the doctrines and commandments of man.

The very reason why so many millions of the earth have heard preaching yet never obeyed God is because something besides the word of God has been preached. "Preachers have not been content simply to tell men what God has said for them to do, but like Satan in the garden, they have taught that it is not necessary to respect God's will by obeying His commandments. They blandly excuse men from obedience to God by teaching that some of God's commandments are non-essential. The attitude of modern preachers toward baptism is an outstanding example of this liven though they admit that baptism is of divine origin, authorized and commanded by Christ, modern preachers say that it is not necessary, and tell men that they can be saved even though they do not do it, for it is a non-essential. Hence men are taught to sit in judgment upon the word of God and decide for themselves according to their own wisdom and will what they must or must not do to be saved. If the soldiers of an army obeyed the commands of their officers in that fashion, there would never be a battle won by them. Such men are not preaching the will or the word of God. They are not teaching men to believe God's word and obey His will, but are encouraging men to change the truth of God into a lie and thus respect man's will above the will of God.

In preaching the Bible, we must preach what God has said, the necessity of doing what God tells men to do, for the very purpose God has selected to be accomplished. this must be the attitude of the gospel preacher in all matters. The Bible teaches that by the word of God men will be judged in the last day (John 12:48). Since it is to be the standard by which we are to be judged, then it

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should be the standard of authority by which to measure our faith, obedience, service, worship and life. Any other standard is false and hence every human creed fails.

Modern preachers make many promises that God's word does not make. They give us their assurance and the assurance of their creeds or disciplines that a certain practice is right and acceptable when the word of God has nothing to say about it. They tell men human names are all right when God has not given them, taught anyone to wear them, or promised to recognize them. They substitute of their own will another action, as in the case of sprinkling for immersion, when God has never indicated that men should have water sprinkled upon them for any purpose at all, and in such substitutions of human authority for divine authority, they tell us that something God has not said is just to good as what God has said. Is this respect for God's word? Is this preaching the Bible?

Many so-called gospel preachers today feel free to bind their own opinions upon people as the law and the Gospel and demand recognition and obedience to their mandate on a par with what God has said.

Paul taught that to recognize and bow to the mandates of man's authority, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," is to disrespect the authority of Christ (Col. 2:20-23). No Bible preacher will preach his own will or judgment and undertake to bind such upon the souls of men for God says, "Why do ye subject yourselves to human ordinances?"

The gospel preacher recognizes but one law and that is the will of Christ who said, "All authority is mine both in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations." He refuses to subscribe to any man-made creed or law but recognizes Jesus only as Lord and gives allegiance to no other.

When men set forth their own rules of faith and action, excuse others from obedience to God's commandments, promise man immunity from God's condemnation when they fail to do his will, provide ways and means of their own in human organizations rather than doing God's work in His own way, they are neither respecting the Bible as the word of God, nor are they teaching others to respect it.

The Bible should be preached as God's only revelation to man. It should be preached as God's will and therefore man's duty to do

## THE STANDARD OF DIVINE AUTHORITY

whatever it teaches. It should be exalted as the only means of spiritual light, and the only standard of divine authority. Why should men preach anything else? What else is there to preach?

When Jesus saw many of those who had followed him turning away and asked of the Apostles, "Will ye also go away?" Peter replied, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Such needs to be the conviction of every preacher today.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PLACE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN PREACHING

Perhaps no part of the Bible is misused more in modern preaching than the Old Testament. Yet an understanding of truth and the preaching of truth depends upon the Old Testament's being given its proper place. We want, therefore, in this chapter and under this heading to inquire, "What is the place that should be given to Old Testament Scriptures in Gospel preaching?" God has preserved the Old Testament for a purpose. Christians need to study it and preachers need to preach it, but it needs to be given the place in such study and preaching that God intended for it to occupy.

#### NOT AUTHORITATIVE TODAY

We need to learn, first of all, that Old Testament Scriptures cannot correctly be used today as authority. Any doctrine that depends entirely upon Old Testament teaching is not a doctrine that belongs to Christianity. Notwithstanding this very important fact we many times find preachers relying upon Old Testament authority to establish their teaching.

The preacher who does not discriminate or discern between Old and New Testament authority does not know the difference between Christianity and Judaism. The Adventist goes back to the Old Testament for his authority to practice Sabbath keeping. In the absence of teaching by Christ and the apostles that Saturday instead of Sunday, the seventh instead of the first, should be observed as the day of Christian worship, such teaching is necessarily based upon Old Testament Scriptures. Such a question would never have been raised in religious teaching today if all had learned that the law of Moses with all of its institutions had been done away through the cross of Christ. What the Adventist needs to find, then, is the establishment of the seventh day of the week by the authority of Christ as the day of Christian worship. He needs to be able to establish his contention by the fact that the apostles of Christ practiced and preached Sabbath keeping. He needs a

## NOT AUTHORITATIVE TODAY

passage from the Holy Spirit recording Sabbath observance upon the part of the New Testament Church. These he cannot find.

Paul, author of the Hebrew letter, declares, "God, having of Old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son" (Heb. 1:1, 2).

On the mountain of transfiguration the lesson of the pre-eminence of Christ was emphasized to Peter and the other apostles so that they could never forget it. Having witnessed Christ in glorified form discoursing with Moses and Elijah, Peter was over whelmed. As a Jew he had heard all of his life about the great lawgiver, Moses. He knew the details of his life as they had been preserved in Jewish scriptures and tradition. Yet he had never expected to behold Moses while he himself yet lived in the flesh. He likewise knew of Elijah and all the dramatic incidents of his life as the great prophet of God, yet had never hoped to see him in this world. Both of them reappeared from the spirit world and held a conversation with Christ in the presence of Peter, James and John. Necessarily, of course, it was revealed unto these apostles that those in the company of Christ were Moses and Elijah. Peter cried out in his exultation over such a wonderful sight, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If thou wilt, I will build here three tabernacles, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." In the very midst of such a declaration, in thunder long tones from heaven, as they were overshadowed by, a cloud, God spoke, "This is my beloved Son, HEAR YE HIM." He had acknowledged Jesus as His Son before, but upon this occasion the lesson is found in the words, "HEAR YE HIM." This is the demand of Christianity. The authority of Christ is pre-eminent, all-inclusive and exclusive. One cannot be a Christian without respecting the authority of Christ, and one cannot be a Christian and respect the authority of anyone else. Christ is not to be put on a par with Moses and the prophets. He superseded them and is to be heard and obeyed rather than Moses and the prophets. Many passages in the Bible thus teach.

In Acts 3:22, Peter, one of the principals in the above mentioned scene, was preaching in the city of Jerusalem and declared, "Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall come

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to pass that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people." Here is a warning by Moses that a failure to abide by the authority of Christ will be fatal.

Again, Paul in writing to the Galatians said "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that, if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. Yea, I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:2-4).

Why, we are asked, would it disrespect the authority of Christ for men to turn back to Moses and the prophets for guidance? The answer is because Christ exercises *all authority both in heaven and on earth*, and does not share that position with any other. There was a time when Moses spake with heaven's authority but that time is not now. There was a time when God demanded that the prophets be heard and their message obeyed, but that time is not now. Now we are to hear and obey Christ and recognize the authority of His word.

On this point, hear Paul again, "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and break down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his Resh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby?" Here we are told that Christ in his death upon the cross took the law, which was not only a barrier between Jew and Gentile but also a barrier between the Gentile and reconciliation with God upon equal terms with the Jew, out of the way and destroyed the enmity it created. Why would men try to rebuild such a barrier again?

Perhaps as conclusive a passage along this line as there is in God's word is found in Romans, chapter seven. Here we read, "For the woman that hath a husband is bound by the law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband. So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of

## NOT AUTHORITATIVE TODAY

Christ; that ye should be joined to another, even to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God." The question simply is, "To whom are we married as Christians, Moses or Christ?" The answer, of course, *is Christ*. If we undertake to be married or joined to both and to be in subjection to both as Adventists, for example, by observing some things Moses taught and some things Christ has taught, we are guilty of spiritual adultery. Then again the passage teaches that if husband number one, to which the Jew was married, viz., the law of Moses, has not died so that he is freed from that relationship, then he cannot be joined unto Christ without being an adulterer, hence no salvation has been provided in Christ for the Jew unless the law has been taken out of the way. Here the Adventist would say, "That means the ceremonial law." The fact is the word of God makes no such division as that, it is purely of man. And even if such were to be made this passage is unmistakably pointing to the Ten Commandment law for it quotes therefrom in this very connection, verse 7, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

The law, then, to which Paul refers in this passage (Romans 7) to which men have been made dead through the body of Christ is definitely the law that said, "Thou shalt not covet," and that is one of the Ten Commandments. This removes all question.

Frequently we hear preachers say that nine of the ten commandments have been held over under the Gospel of Christ. Those who think so should read the language of Christ in Matt. 5, and learn that each moral commandment was repealed by Christ and changed from a carnal law, the condemnation of the outward act, to a spiritual law, the condemnation of sin in the heart. This is the essential difference between the law of Moses, the religion of the Jews, and the Gospel of Christ. The former is a fleshly, carnal law, while the latter is a law of the Spirit written upon our hearts.

You can learn how men entered into the Abrahamic covenant and how the Jews worshiped God by reading and studying the Old Testament, but if you want to know how to become a Christian, enter the new covenant, and worship and serve God acceptably as a Christian, then you must come to the New Testament for



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the Old Testament Scriptures do not answer these questions. *The religion of Christ is a New Testament religion.*

To say that the Old Testament Scriptures are not authority today in matters religious does not mean that they are not inspired, Surely every man should believe with Peter when he declares, "But men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1:21). Here he is speaking of the prophets. They were inspired and an inspired record of their writings has been preserved for us in Old Testament Scriptures, but it is an inspired history and tells us about a system of religion that has been repealed and today is void of authority. It simply is not the law of God now. It has exactly the same status as a law, which, though once binding has been repealed. This must be taken notice of by every preacher who today preaches the truth. The Old Testament should be preached. It should be preached as an inspired record. Every principle of truth therein recorded and taught should be preached with vigor and power. But it should not be preached as God's law to men today, or else the truth will not be taught.

It would be just as reasonable to preach the message of Noah to the world today and try to get men to observe it as applicable to them; or the message of Jonah to Nineveh as binding upon men now, as to preach the message of Moses to the Jews or the message of the prophets to the people of their generation, and make such binding upon men who are trying to serve Christ.

Many religious practices today come from Old Testament teaching entirely. The Catholic gets the idea of his rituals, burning of incense, etc, from Old Testament Scriptures. Infant Church membership and infant baptism is defended by those who teach and practice upon the basis of circumcision in the Old Testament. Mechanical instruments of music are defended upon the ground that they were used by the Jews in their worship and David talked about them. The very fact that those who would establish such practices must go to the Old Testament for their proof is evidence enough that they recognize that Christ and the apostles did not teach such practices. Yet if men would stop to think, instrumental music, burning of incense, sprinkling of babies, polygamy, Sabbath keeping, and all similar practices must stand upon the same ground. Christ taught none of them. If there is any Bible authority at all it must be in the Old Testament. If being found there, which is not the case always when it is claimed, justifies one practice, then

## SPECULATION OF PROPHECY

it would justify every practice found there and we would be under obligation for honesty" sake to accept every other practice brought over from the same source. That would mean that Christianity would have to swallow Judaism as a whole.

Preach the Old Testament, with all of your heart and soul, but preach it as inspired history from which many object lessons may be drawn, but do not preach it as religious law, valid and in force in this generation. No man can do so and respect the authority of Christ.

## SPECULATION OF PROPHECY

The scourge of this present generation so far as preaching is concerned is the misapplication, imaginative interpretation, wrong ful speculation, etc., with which men burden down Old Testament prophecies. In preaching about prophecies and their meaning, there is a rule that should always be kept in mind. It is this: any position or application based upon a prophecy the meaning of which has not been definitely given by the Holy Spirit, or which has not been established by the plain events of history, through the apostles or other inspired teachers, is pure speculation and belongs in the realm of opinion. When men set forth their own private ideas concerning prophecies which cannot be corroborated by other teaching from the Word of God they are not teaching the truth, nor are they preaching the Bible, but are preaching their own opinions and speculation.

The position of us all with reference to prophecy is pretty much that of the Ethiopian Eunuch, who, when he read from Isaiah 53, and was asked, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" replied, "How can I except someone shall guide me? " We may think we know to whom the prophecy refers or to what event it points, but in reality there are only two ways of interpreting prophecy. First, there is history. When events which are beyond question fit into that, there is no doubt then history has interpreted that prophecy for us. This is a test which God himself gave to Israel in Deuteronomy 18:21, 22, "And if thou say in thy heart, How shall we know the word which Jehovah hath spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of Jehovah, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which Jehovah hath not spoken: the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously." Second, there is the interpretation and application of prophecy

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by the Holy Spirit. When the Eunuch (Acts 8) read the prophecy from Isaiah and raised the question, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself, or of some other?" the answer came that he was speaking of Christ. The record says, "Philip opened his mouth and beginning from this same scripture preached unto him Jesus." This application was not just opinion.. There was not the element of speculation. This was the Holy Spirit, through an inspired teacher, applying this prophecy and of the application we can be certain. Such an application is far removed from modern seers who advertise sensational themes and undertake to apply the prophecies of the Bible to events that are yet in the future. They are neither guided by the event which history has recorded nor by the Spirit, but are simply false teachers who deserve neither the respect nor support of people who are interested in serving God and respecting His Word.

This rule is laid down by the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Peter in II Peter 1:16-21, "For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there was borne such a voice to him by the Majestic Glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount. *And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of Private interpretation.*" Preachers should remember that God has told us what he wants us to know, but "the secret things belong unto God."

### THE PROPER APPLICATION OF OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES

The proper application of Old Testament Scriptures in preaching today would make the richest contribution to the message of gospel preaching that is possible. The Old Testament should be preached to establish, strengthen, and sustain faith in the New Testament and its institutions as divine. Jesus taught that such a purpose is to be served by Old Testament Scriptures. He declared, "These are they which bear witness of me." The identity of Jesus as the Christ of God can be established by his fulfillment of every

## PROPER APPLICATION OF OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES

prophecy that had been made concerning him. Matthew's Gospel, written especially for the Jews, calls attention time and again to the fact that Jesus in what he taught, did, and all he was had fulfilled what the prophets had said about him. Such a relation between the Old and New Testaments needs emphasis for there is no greater argument for the divinity of both.

It has been aptly said that the Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed. It is certain that by the use and study of both they are found corroborative and complementary to each other. The types and shadows of Christianity that are found in the Old Testament testify to the eternal purpose of God being worked out step by step as its history was being made. In no other way than by divine power could it have been made possible for the institutions of the old Jewish system to have found their antitype or counterpart in the realities of the New Covenant. Paul declares that the Law had a shadow of good things to come (Heb. 10:1). The purpose of God can the more easily be discerned by thus being able to see its unfolding through the ages.

The history of the Old Testament characters has not been written and preserved for the sake of their interesting history alone. In them can be found exemplified every principle of God's righteousness. While the law of God has changed, the principles of God's righteousness are the same that they have always been. These principles are demonstrated and exemplified for us in the characters of the Old Testament. We need to study them and they need to be preached for the inspiration they can give to those who would know what constitutes acceptable character before God. In the faith of Abraham, who believed whatever God said in spite of the circumstances, and who did whatever God said in spite of the cost, we find demonstrated what it really means to believe in God. From Daniel we learn of virtue, moral goodness, and the strength that comes in time of trial from devotion to such a principle, in his refusal to defile himself with the king's dainties, or to turn away his face from Jerusalem. When we turn to Job we learn what patience really means as we see the man who was stripped of earthly possessions in successive strokes of fate, and who was afflicted with boils from head to foot, yet in the patience of his suffering was able to say, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord." And then again, "Though

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he slay me yet will I trust in him." Moses is held before us as the meekest man on earth, and yet the great leader of God's people. Elijah on Mount Carmel teaches us what courage of conviction really is, and we learn from Nehemiah the story of patient, persistent adherence to a God-given task.

Paul reviews the characters of Old Testament history for us from righteous Abel through Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, and after finally announcing that time did not permit him to tell of all, in chapter eleven of the Hebrew letter, he tells us in chapter twelve, "Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:1, 2). The witnesses are the characters from the Old Testament who testify to us from the pages of Old Testament history of the principles of God's righteousness. Surely they should be studied and preached for the great contribution they are able to make to the building of righteous characters.

Even here our preaching of the Old Testament cannot be ended. We must teach the world respect for God's Word. God has always condemned men who trifled with His word. Disobedience and rebellion against God have never been countenanced. The warnings of God have always been executed against those who would not hear his counsel. This is the testimony of four thousand years of Old Testament history. Paul states the matter in these words: "Let us therefore give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation" (Heb. 2:1-3). The solemn fact that there is no escape for the man who trifles with God's will is the testimony of four thousand years of God's dealing with men in Old Testament days. There can be no substitution, subtraction, addition, or rebellion without God's judgment being pronounced and suffered unless forgiveness is obtained upon God's terms.

The end of the testimony of the Old Testament is not even yet. To all of the above can be added the testimony of Israel, whose history teaches us that God will cast off his own people if they forsake Him and His will. From the bondage of Egypt God brought them forth with the promise of Canaan before them, a

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land that flowed with milk and honey. Notwithstanding God's faithful provision for them, they were unfaithful in the wilderness, and the trail of their journeying was strewn with the graves of those who brought the displeasure of God upon them through their sins. Even with his people every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward. They perished in the wilderness through unbelief and disobedience (Heb. 3:16-19). Every grave from Kadesh Barnea back through forty years of wilderness wandering stands as a monument to the fact that a child of God can fall into condemnation through unfaithfulness and disobedience. Here were one million arguments against the old Calvinistic doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy. They did fall, and their failure is to be a warning to us, and for this very purpose it has been written in the Scriptures and preserved. Hear Paul again on this point, "Howbeit with most of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us make trial of the Lord, as some of them made trial, and perished by the serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer. Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Cor. 10:5-12). Here is a warning, impressed and enforced with actual example, showing the disaster of God's children turning away through unbelief and disobedience. It must be preached, or truth will suffer and men will be deceived.

Finally, the Old Testament must be preached in order that men may know that they can trust God for a fulfillment of His promises. No better evidence can be given of this than the fact that God has fulfilled in the past every promise he has ever made. Let us look at the Old Testament history for the record. Joshua testified, "And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which Jehovah your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, not one thing

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hath failed thereof (josh. 23:14). Solomon, in the presence of Israel assembled, cried with a loud voice, "Blessed be Jehovah, that hath given rest unto His people Israel, according to all his good promises, which he promised by Moses his servant" (I Kings 8:56). Not one word of any promise did God break. He kept them all. Surely such testimony many times repeated in Old Testament history is enough to inspire confidence in our hearts that God will do, no less for us than he has promised. For this very purpose, to give us hope and confidence, this part of God's word has been preserved for our reading, study, and preaching. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

## CHAPTER III

### PREACHING CHRIST

The Bible must be preached in order that Christ may be preached for He is the great subject of the Bible. The message of the Bible could well be summed up in the statements: *Christ is coming*; *Christ has come*; and *Christ is coming again*. The message of the Old Testament in type and shadow, in law, prophecy, and psalms was *Christ is coming*. The message of the Gospels is *Christ has come*. The epistles and the rest of the New Testament emphasize and promise that *Christ is coming again*. Indeed Christ is the central theme of the entire Bible. Paul says of the law of Moses, "So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24). However, Paul reminds Timothy that the law itself must be used lawfully (I Tim. 1 :8). In other words, if it is properly taught and applied it will serve that purpose. Christ can be preached by preaching the Old Testament though for he was the Christ of promise and prophecy. He was the Christ for whom the world was kept in waiting, the Christ for whom God was preparing the world. For four thousand years every type, promise, and prophecy pointed forward to him. From the day God told Eve, "Your seed shall bruise the serpent's head," down through the promise to Abraham, "In thee shall all of the families of the earth be blessed," and in the message (of every prophet, God kept His people reminded of the coming of Christ. Yes, the prophets preached Christ, Peter declared, "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days." These Old Testament prophecies preached the Christ that would come. Today we preach the Christ who has come in fulfillment of all they predicted concerning him.

John the Baptist came as a special messenger of God's grace to the Jews. His *purpose was one of preparation*. He did not come to build a church, establish any new institutions or institute any permanent practices. His message, ministry, and work was altogether preparatory in nature. Of him Isaiah predicted, "The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of



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Jehovah; make level in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low" (Isa. 40:3, 4). So, John was a messenger before the face of the Lord to prepare the way for him. He was to remove the difficulties in the hearts and lives of the Jews and get them ready to receive Christ. Accordingly, he preached unto them repentance toward God that, they might correct their attitude toward God and be prepared to believe in Christ. As a sign of such repentance he commanded them to be baptized and thus was renewed the hope of the remission of sins. John's work must be understood as preparatory. He did not fulfill the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, but came preparing the way for the Christ of whom they spoke.

It is singular that during the personal ministry of Jesus the apostles themselves were not allowed to preach that he was Christ. When Peter had confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the record tells us, "Then charged he the disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ" (Matt. 16:21). Again in Luke 9:21, we read, "But he charged them, and commanded them to tell this to no man; saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up." Thus we learn that preaching Christ was still in a state of preparation and that a full message of Christ as the Son of God was not to be proclaimed until Jesus had died and been raised from the dead.

When Jesus had come forth from the dead by the power of God, he appeared unto the apostles whom he had chosen and trained and commissioned them. Matthew's record of this commission reads thus, "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 10, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20). According to the Gospel of Luke, Jesus further instructed them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations beginning from Jerusalem. Ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send forth the promise of

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my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:46-49).

Thus we see that all preparation had been made, Christ had died and had been raised from the dead; his chosen ambassadors had been instructed to wait in the city of Jerusalem and when they received the Holy Spirit, as Christ had promised they would (John 14:16, 26; John 16:7-14), they were, by the power thus imparted, to begin to preach Christ.

When Jesus ascended into heaven they retraced their steps into Jerusalem and waited the coming Spirit from heaven. On the day of Pentecost, according to the record in Acts 2, the Holy Spirit came and these chosen ambassadors of Christ began, under divine direction, to preach repentance and the remission of sins in the name of Christ (Luke 24:47). This preaching was to begin in Jerusalem and be extended unto all the nations of the world. This is the beginning of gospel preaching. Here Christ was preached as God "had intended from the foundations of the world that he should be. He was declared to be both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:37). Years afterward Peter looked back upon this experience in the city of Jerusalem and said it was "the beginning" (Acts 11:15).

Christ had died and his will had become effective (Heb. 9:15-17). Upon men now were bound the terms and conditions of that will. Prior to his death these terms and conditions were not in effect for the will of Christ was not in force. This explains why men cannot be saved like men were saved before the cross of Christ and the preaching of the Gospel began. If the Bible is preached, force and effect must be given to the New Will and Testament established by the death of Jesus.

From Pentecost on, Christ was the great subject of Christian preaching. The record of Acts tells us over and over again of Christ being preached. Peter preached Christ on Pentecost, and according to Acts 3 upon a later occasion in Jerusalem. In Acts 8 we read of the work of Philip, the evangelist. Verse 5 says, "Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them Christ." Again in verse 35 we read, "And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from the scripture, preached unto him Jesus." Acts 9:20 records for us the first sermon of the converted infidel by the name of Saul, "And straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God." And thus the

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record tells us the story of Bible preaching done in the New Testament age. We can find no better pattern for preaching today.

### WHAT IT MEANS TO PREACH CHRIST

When the New Testament records the story of gospel preaching by telling us that they preached "Christ," what does such a record include? What did they preach when they preached Christ?

We look for the answer to this inquiry, first of all, to the first gospel sermon ever preached. On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached the great facts concerning Christ: (1) His approved life (Acts 2:22) ; (2) His sacrificial death (Acts 2:23) ; (3) His burial (Acts 2:27); (4) His glorious resurrection (Acts 2:32) ; (5) His triumphant ascension (Acts 2:33). When these facts had been declared, Peter preached the commandments of Christ (1) Know assuredly, or believe beyond a doubt that Jesus is both Lord and Christ (John 8:24, Acts 2:36) ; (2) Repent (Lk. 13:3, Acts 2:38) ; (3) Be baptized (Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38). Furthermore, in preaching Christ, Peter preached his promises. They were: (1) The remission of sins, and (2) the gift of the Holy Spirit. Here we have the divine pattern for preaching Christ. Too often it is marred by unfaithful preachers who either leave part of it out, or pervert and change it until its truth and power is lost.

In order to see further what it means to preach Christ we look at the preaching of Philip in chapter 8 of Acts. He preached Christ to the Samaritans (8:15), but he preached the "things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ" (8:12). Therefore, when the things concerning the kingdom of God are preached then Christ is preached, and when Christ is preached the name of Christ is preached.

If one should inquire further, what did Philip preach about the kingdom when he preached Christ, the answer can be found by looking at certain Scriptures which set forth some principles about the kingdom, clearly and positively.

**I. The nature of the Kingdom of Christ is spiritual, not earthly.** Jesus answer, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36).

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"And being asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God cometh, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, lo, here! or there! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20, 21).

"For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17).

### **II. That kingdom began on Pentecost and is in existence now.**

"And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them as it did on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15).

(1) The Holy Spirit came in the beginning. "But ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

(2) With the Holy Spirit in the beginning came the Power. "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark 9:1). (3)

(3) With that power came the kingdom in the beginning.

(4) Therefore with the coming of the Holy Spirit, in the beginning, came the kingdom. In Acts 2, the record is given of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, hence that day of Pentecost marks the beginning of the kingdom.

### **III. The present existence of the kingdom is shown by its inseparable connection with:**

(1) The New Birth puts one into the kingdom (John 3:3-5). Therefore, no new birth now if no kingdom now.

(2) Conversion puts one into the kingdom (Matt. 18:3). Therefore, no conversion now if no kingdom now.

(3) When our sins are washed away by the blood of Christ we are in the kingdom (Rev. 1:5, 6). Therefore, if the kingdom is yet future, then remission of sins by the blood of Christ is yet in the future.

(4) When we are delivered out of the kingdom of darkness we are translated into the kingdom (Col. 1:13). Therefore, if the kingdom has not yet come, then men are still in the kingdom of darkness.

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(5) The Lord's Supper is in the kingdom (Luke 22:29). Therefore, if no kingdom yet, then the Lord's Supper cannot be properly observed.

### **IV. Christ is now king in all the fullness of his power.**

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth" (Rev. 1 :5). Christ is now universal potentate.

"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:20-23). There is no power, authority, rule, dominion, or greater glory than that enjoyed by Christ at God's right hand. This position he has occupied since he was raised from the dead and exalted to God's right hand.

All of this Philip preached when he preached Christ. No preacher today can preach Christ and leave out the gospel of the kingdom of God exactly as it was preached then. All of the speculative, so-called prophetic teaching that is done today concerning a thousand years' reign on this earth by Christ when he comes again denies the present position of Christ and therefore undermines the very fundamentals of the Gospel of Christ.

When Philip preached Christ he preached the name of Christ. In the light of all that men preach about "One name being as good as another in religion," and "there isn't anything in a name, anyway," it is enlightening to review what the Bible teaches regarding the name of Christ that we may know what Philip preached when he preached Christ. Bible teaching concerning the name of Christ can be summed up from just a few passages of Scriptures. Isaiah prophesied that a new name would be given by the mouth of the Lord when the Gentiles saw God's righteousness (Isa. 62:2). Jesus instructed Annanias to go to Saul in the street called Straight, in the city of Damascus, for, "He is a chosen vessel to bear my name before the Gentiles and the kings of the earth" (Acts 9:15). In Acts 11, we learn that the gospel had been taken as far as Antioch of Syria, and the Gentiles had accepted it and

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for the first time both Jews and Gentiles were brought into a common fellowship in a congregation. Barnabas had been despatched from Jerusalem to Antioch and he sought Saul out in the neighboring province of Silicia, and together they preached and taught the gospel in Antioch. While Saul was there, in accordance with prophecy and promise, "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26). This is the name God has given, a new name, the name of Christ.

Concerning this name, Peter said, "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in the name" (I Peter 4:16). This has been said of no other name.

In Colossians 3:17, Paul teaches, "And whatsoever you do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus:" This simply requires that we do nothing in any other name.

Furthermore, we hear the declaration, "And gave unto him the name which is above every name," and learn that no name is as good as the name of Christ (Phil. 2:9).

Finally Peter made the matter of the name definite when he testified, "He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders which was made the head of the corner. And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:11, 12). Here the final word is that there is no salvation in any other name.

To sum up the testimony it runs like this: (1) Do all you do in the name of Christ. That means do nothing in any other name; (2) Glorify God in the name of Christ; (3) No other name as good as the name of Christ; (4) No other name but the name of Christ. This is the way Christ was preached by inspired men 1900 years ago and in this same way Christ must now be preached.

Sometimes people voice the idea that Christ and the Bible should be preached without controversial themes being discussed. Of course, such an idea is born of a lack of conviction of the truth. Philip preached God's truth and man's duty in no uncertain terms. He preached Christ in such a way that the Ethiopian Eunuch raised the question, "Why can't I be baptized?" (Acts 8:36). Christ had been preached in such a way as to make a man want to be baptized. That is remarkable when you listen to much modern preaching which tells you that you can preach Christ and never mention baptism and which, if it does mention baptism, does so

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only to discredit it by teaching that it is an outward, earthly ordinance and non-essential. Such preaching as that would not cause any soul to cry out, "Why can't I be baptized?"

Philip could not preach the Christ of the Bible without preaching his commandments and persuading men, if possible, to obey them. He could not preach the Bible that sets forth Christ without preaching the Kingdom of Christ and the name of Christ. Men today who preach the Bible and the Christ revealed therein will preach exactly as inspired men preached 1900 years ago.

## CHAPTER IV

### PAUL'S PATTERN OF PREACHING

This world has never seen a greater Bible preacher than Paul, the apostle of Christ to the Gentiles. From the very time that he learned that it was God's will and plan for him to preach the gospel, he conferred not with flesh or blood, but entered "straightway into the synagogue and proclaimed Jesus, that he was the Christ." He constantly prayed that he might "lay hold on that for which he was laid hold on." He "counted all things as refuse in order to gain Christ," and forgot the things behind and stretched forward to the things before that he might "press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." A careful study of the pattern of preaching Paul left for the world will surely be beneficial.

*Acts 20:18-35*

In this passage we have Paul reviewing his work in Ephesus to the Ephesian elders. The record that he gives us is significant. In Paul's work as a preacher he "served the Lord with all lowliness of mind" (verse 19). Here is the spirit of Christ and the quality of a great preacher. None has ever had more confidence in the message or less in himself. The man who is full of self-importance and self-reliance will trust in his own wisdom and depart from God's Word, and will depend upon his own strength and fall.

Paul "shrank not from declaring anything profitable" (verse 20). Here is another vital quality for a preacher. As a mother administers distasteful medicine to her child for its own good, so a Bible preacher must often preach things distasteful to some who hear because they need them. The preacher who will not preach what is needed whether it will make him popular or unpopular is in the wrong work. He has no regard for the souls of men or the truth. He should be a politician instead of a preacher.

Paul was not willing to shun his responsibility or turn aside from an opportunity to further the Gospel of Christ even in the interest of preserving his own life. He held "not my life of any account



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as dear unto myself so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (verse 24). A true Bible preacher will not let personal privation, sacrifice, hardship, popular opinion, friendship, or anything else, no, not even danger to his own life deter him in preaching the truth.

Another remarkable characteristic of Paul as a preacher is seen in the statement, "I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God." There was no part of the gospel he was either afraid or ashamed to preach. The world needs today and God can use today preachers who will preach a truly full gospel message. Men who will neither add nor subtract, substitute or pervert for any consideration, but who will preach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in spite of the consequence. Paul did not quit when he had told sinners what to do to be saved. He went right on to tell Christians how to live, worship and serve God so as to be saved in heaven eternally.

Paul's philosophy was to learn the will of God as it had been revealed, live by it and preach it as the all-sufficient word of God. So we hear him in bidding the Ephesians farewell, saying, "And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified" (verse 32). Preachers today need that kind of confidence in God's word. It is able to direct man unto eternal salvation. It needs to be pointed out and preached so as to inspire this confidence.

### *Romans 1:14-17*

Perhaps no passage more truly portrays the attitude of this great preacher toward God's Word and the souls of men than these verses. The grace of God that had been extended to Paul when he was so persistently persecuting the followers of Christ, by the vision of Christ on the Damascus road, he understood, had not been merely for his own salvation. He knew God had saved him in order that he might save others, and he was so grateful for his own salvation that he considered himself a "debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to wise and to the foolish." Knowing that all men need to be saved, he accepted the task of doing all that he could toward helping to save them. Out of that gratitude for the salvation of his own soul, he "was

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ready, as much as in me is, to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome." Here is the true spirit of Christian service; readiness to the extent of one's ability. The Christian will say, "I am ready to do what I can." The message of Christian responsibility is individual ability.

Paul knew that the hope of the world for salvation was the gospel of Christ. We hear him declaring concerning the gospel, "It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." No man can be saved by faith unless it is by the power of the gospel. "Faith cometh of hearing, and hearing of the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). For this very reason God has ordained the preaching of His Word. It alone is able to produce faith to the saving of the soul. Preaching God's Word was the only way Paul could pay his debt by working in the interest of the salvation of as many as possible.

We are told why the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. In verse 17, Paul declares, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith unto faith." A complete revelation of God's will and law is found in the gospel, and thus the gospel is able to direct man unto the saving of his soul. God's Word has been revealed for this purpose and the Church of the Lord has been commissioned to preach the Word of God for this purpose.

*Romans 3:3, 4*

When men dissent from God's Word, how much consideration do they deserve? Paul declares that they should be given exactly none. He was not discussing it from a political point of view. In religious matters and on whatever God has spoken, even if the whole world refused to believe it, God's Word is right. Paul lets it be known that he had rather stand with God alone than have the whole world with him and be without God. Sentiment has often been raised in support of the proposition that popular public opinion, or the voice of a majority of the people, has some value in determining the truth. This Paul denies and disputes in these very positive words, "Shall their want of faith make of none effect the faithfulness of God? God forbid: yea, let God be found true, but every man a liar." To put it in common words today, "Believe it or not, what God says is true even if the whole world dissents." Preachers of the Bible must have the courage to stand upon the Bible and preach its truth if it condemns all of those in

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high places and disputes the philosophy of the world's wisest. God's word is true.

### *I Cor. 1:17*

We learn of Paul as a preacher in this verse also and the lesson is a valuable one, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." This statement has been often misconstrued and misapplied. Many would have the verse to stop by saying, "Christ sent me not to baptize." By their use of it they leave the impression that the verse teaches that baptism is unimportant and nonessential, and that Paul so regarded it. This is not true. Paul taught regarding baptism:

- (1) It puts one into Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:26, 27).
- (2) It puts one into the death of Christ (Rom. 6:3). Here is the healing power of his blood. The death of Christ saves us (Rom. 5:10).
- (3) It puts one into the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:13).
- (4) It initiates one into the new life (Rom. 6:4).

All of this and much more indicates that Paul's preaching about baptism was entirely contrary to the modern efforts to cheapen and belittle this divine commandment. It is obedience from the heart to the gospel of Christ (Rom. 6:17-18).

We learn from the very context that Paul did baptize some at Corinth (verses 14, 16). He was grateful that no man could say they were baptized into his name instead of the name of Christ. This is the perversion that existed. Men, supposedly baptized into the name of Christ, were wearing human names (I Cor. 1:13). Paul severely condemned this and taught that having been baptized into the name of Christ, they should wear his name. He adds the double reason that Christ died for them. This no man had done, therefore no human name should be worn.

The Corinthians like many churches today had exalted outward growth. They were taking pride in their great membership and rapid growth in numbers. They exalted the preacher who attracted the greatest crowds and persuaded the largest number to associate themselves with the Church. Such a premium placed before the preacher would spur him on in his effort to secure additions and cause him to forget that his primary obligation was to preach the gospel, confident that the results would be given by God in keeping

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with His will. This is the principle Paul states and all the verse means. It is elliptical and by supplying the words that complete the sense and transposing it so as to see the main statement of the sentence, we have, "Christ sent me to preach the gospel, and not to baptize only." No lesson is needed more by the preachers of this age. Preach the gospel and let the results be with God.

### *I Cor. 2:15*

Here again we get an insight into the work and attitude of this great preacher that is both enlightening and inspiring. First of all in this passage, Paul declares that his message to the Corinthians was a limited message. He was not free to preach his own experiences or philosophy or the wisdom of others. He had set himself to preach only a message based upon, made possible by, and originated with a crucified Christ. Every appeal for authority turned to Christ. "I received of the Lord that which I delivered unto you" (I Cor. 11:23). Every demonstration of a divine grace pointed him out as the example. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). All of it centered in the Lord. "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." Paul preached a full gospel but it was full of Christ, full of divine wisdom, not human testimony.

The manner of presenting this gospel of the crucified Christ is also outstanding. Paul was not interested in impressing them with his own personal wisdom as other preachers at Corinth had evidently been. Paul wanted them to regard not him but his message. So we learn that he did not preach with "excellency of speech or of wisdom." He rather let the testimony of God speak for itself. The truth that he preached was the more outstanding because of the simplicity with which it was presented. Of course, the preacher was less outstanding as a result. That is, as far as these carnal Corinthians were concerned that was true. When modern preachers display great swelling words of wisdom in their efforts to preach and are continually holding up their learning and magnifying their wisdom, they are hindrances to the truth and stand condemned by Paul's example and also his teaching. Only the truth can save, hence, make the truth outstanding.

The preacher's attitude is also singular in this verse. "I was with you in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling." No display of conceit, egotism, self-confidence or trust, but rather a

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great demonstration of confidence and trust in God and His Word. The world needs preachers like that.

Finally we notice in this passage the statement, "And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." Instead of seeking to establish himself in their hearts and win their confidence for himself, Paul sought only to bring them to an abiding faith and trust in God. All Bible preaching must have such a purpose.

### *II Cor. 4:1-7*

Paul had enemies. When any man preaches the truth as Paul preached it, he will make enemies. Much of the second Corinthian letter was written for the purpose of correcting many of the false charges made by the enemies of Paul. He was not interested in his own defense, but he did not want the work he had done to suffer. In this passage he affirms that he has done nothing that he is ashamed or afraid to face. The causes of shame Paul had renounced long before, and had walked in all honor thereafter. "But we have renounced the hidden things of shame" (verse 2). All Paul was and all he did was open for investigation. How remarkable that he could say that there was nothing hidden in his life that would be a cause for shame.

Furthermore, he affirms that his preaching had been done in utmost honesty and sincerity. He had taught nothing in a corner. He had kept nothing back. He had not been guilty of playing politics with the truth for his own advantage, but had preached the same truth at Corinth that he had elsewhere. "Not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully: but by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Paul had dealt with every man in every situation and had taught the truth ever conscious of the fact that none of it was hidden from God. Straightforwardness, honesty, sincerity upon the part of a Bible preacher are necessary qualities. There is no room for doubled dealing or a two-faced disposition toward the truth.

The only man who cannot understand God's will and his duty when the Gospel is preached as Paul preached it, is the man who will not learn; who is willfully ignorant; who refuses to be taught.

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God's revelation is not a revelation to him. The glorious light of the gospel cannot shine forth in such a heart, not even by the power of God. The only veil upon the gospel is the veil willfully held before the heart by the people who perish that they might not even learn the truth or be disturbed by it. Many people willfully turn away from Bible preaching and refuse to hear A for fear it will disturb their self-satisfied complacency. God's word is enlightening to all except the man who is determined not to see it. And to such an individual, not even the glorious power of the gospel in all of its light can be illuminating, for his eyes are closed and his ears are stopped, and his heart is veiled by his own will (Matt. 13-14-16). Even the same God who said, "Let there be light," in the beginning is not able to make the man see who does not want to see.

"We have this treasure in earthen vessels" (verse 7). Here we are made to think of Gideon's band of Old Testament history and the plan of attack God gave them. The picture is an empty pitcher with a torch within and in the darkness of the night when the pitchers were broken the torches shone forth with such suddenness and power and on every side so that the impression was overwhelming. Paul regarded himself an earthen or clay pitcher or vessel to whom the glorious light of the gospel of Christ had been entrusted, which when broken, persecuted, falsely accused, only made the light of the gospel the more free to shine abroad. What a wonderful attitude to take toward the Word of God and one's self. So many of us are so interested in preserving the pitcher we have smothered out the light.

"But having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, I believed, and therefore did I speak." What a grand defense of what he both believed and taught. Center and circumference of what he believed and preached was "that which is written." He refused to believe it or speak it unless it was written. God needs men today who are willing to preach all God has said and only what God has said.

## CHAPTER V

### INSTRUCTIONS TO A YOUNG PREACHER

Paul's letters to Timothy are especially instructive on the theme of "The Place of the Bible in Preaching." These letters were written for the special purpose of strengthening Timothy as a young preacher, and helping him to avoid the pitfalls into which he might otherwise stumble. They are commonly called the "Pastoral Letters." There is, however, no justification for such a term in connection with them. The teaching of the Word of God certainly does not justify the use of the term "pastor" as it applies to a preacher of the Gospel. A preacher is not a pastor unless he is an elder. The terms "pastor," "bishop," and "elder," are used interchangeably in the word of God. In Acts 20:17 the record tells us that Paul "sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church." Verse 28 tells us that Paul in addressing these elders said, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you *bishops*, to feed (pastor) the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood." Hence the elders are the bishops, and the bishops are to "shepherd" the flock, "pastor" the flock, or feed the flock. This word in the original (*poimaino*) occurs again in I Peter 5:2, "Tend the flock of God," and was directed unto the elders (I Peter 5:1). "Poimeen" occurs in Eph. 4:11 and is there translated "pastor." There is no scriptural ground for the modern conception that the preacher is the "pastor" of the congregation, and, as such, is in authority. He is but a member, and as all other members are subject to the elders, so must he be in order to please God. This is New Testament Church organization. A preacher who will not respect the eldership in God's church is not a Bible preacher, and does not respect God's Word any more than he follows it. Paul had left Timothy in Ephesus and had gone on into Macedonia. He is writing Timothy as a young preacher and fellow worker in the Lord that he might help him to meet the problems that were arising with false teachers, matters of discipline in the church, and the training of the church. Paul was here not only giving Timothy

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inspired instructions, but also the benefit of the wisdom of the greatest of all preachers to a son in the gospel whom he loved.

### *I Timothy 1:3-7*

Paul had warned the elders at Ephesus against false teachers that would arise speaking perverse things and who would draw away disciples after them (Acts 20:29, 30). Timothy remained at Ephesus to help them stem the tide of this false teaching. It is a part of the obligation of every gospel preacher to oppose both false teaching and false teachers. It is not enough for one to just keep his own teaching free from error. Hence Paul instructs Timothy "That thou mightest charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine." Too often men are of the disposition to "let others alone." Timothy could not have been a true gospel preacher and have done so, nor can anyone else. A gospel preacher is not only obligated not to teach a different doctrine, but is responsible for charging others not to do so.

"Neither to give heed to fables and endless genealogies" was also a part of the charge to the false teachers. That these were Jewish fables is most likely (Titus 1:14), and likely were of the same origin as other Jewish fables which gave rise to the Talmud. "Endless genealogies" were the interminable Jewish pedigrees used to exalt individuals as being of priestly or Davidic origin and served no useful end or purpose. In fact, they were subversive of Christianity, and productive of bickering and wrangling that was destructive.

All of these things "minister questionings rather than a dispensation of God which is in faith." They contributed nothing to faith but were destructive of it. They served no useful purpose toward the fulfillment of the "ministration" or stewardship entrusted in accordance with God's will. Paul simply instructs Timothy to charge certain men to spend their time on things that will edify rather than on those that will not, and to give themselves more faithfully to their stewardship.

In this passage emphasis is given to three essentials of a faithful servant of the Lord. They are: (1) Love out of a pure heart, that is, not a feigned or pretended love for selfish reasons, or ruled by hypocrisy or dissimulation; (2) a good conscience or basic, fundamental honesty with one's self so that one's heart does not condemn him; (3) faith unfeigned, a real abiding conviction in the



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truth. If one does not believe what he teaches whole-heartedly, how can he convince others that it is true?

### *I Timothy 1:18-20*

Here Paul declares that he was led to Timothy by divine guidance and under the same guidance Timothy had been left at Ephesus to accomplish the needed work of protecting the church against the encroachment of false doctrines and evil of every sort. Timothy was a soldier in a position of defense. He had been left on guard to ward off the approach of error. Much depended upon his "warring a good warfare." This figure of a warfare is common not only in the writings of Paul but in the record of his life and work it is evident that he had often applied it to himself. He was altogether militant and aggressive and always on guard and in arms against every form of evil and error. The sweet spirit of pacificism, condonation, and compromise so often evident today was unknown and uncountenanced by Paul.

"Holding faith and a good conscience." These are essentials that must never be forgotten. When they are lost and a man undertakes to ride out the storm without them, he is without compass or ballast and can only be tossed about until he makes "shipwreck concerning the faith." Eternal consequences will be suffered by those who do not with a good conscience preserve and keep the faith. They will be "delivered unto Satan." We must learn not to trifle with the word of God.

### *I Timothy 4:1*

In this passage Paul predicts by the Holy Spirit that there would come an apostasy and "some shall fall away from the faith." In several statements in this very epistle Paul points out the disasters which can overtake any man's faith.

- (1) Make shipwreck of the faith (I Timothy 1:19).
- (2) Fall away from the faith (I Tim. 4:1).
- (3) Deny the faith (I Tim. 5:8).
- (4) Led astray from the faith (I Tim. 6:10).
- (5) Err concerning the faith (I Tim. 6:21).

When any of these happen we are not kept by faith (I Peter 1:5) because we have not kept the faith (II Tim. 4:7), and hence will be denied the result to be achieved or end to be accomplished

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by faith, "even the salvation of our souls" (I Peter 1:9). A believer can become an unbeliever just as certainly as an unbeliever can become a believer. The idea that when one has once been saved by faith that guarantees that he will always be is therefore absurd.

By "seducing spirits and doctrines of demons through the hypocrisy of men who speak lies," Christians will be led to forsake the truth to their own destruction. It has always been so and will be as long as the world stands. It is the business of every Bible preacher and teacher to sound out the warning and "put the brethren in mind of these things" (verse 6).

One of the characteristics of false teachers has always been the exercising of human authority. Such men having forsaken the truth do not hesitate to bind their own opinions and preferences as law. They say, "handle not, nor taste, nor touch," without any hesitancy and condemn those who do not bow to their mandates. We must be satisfied when we speak where Christ has spoken. Paul points out this characteristic in verse 3, "forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats." Such teachers should be refused.

The goal set for Timothy as a preacher was to be a "good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith" (verse 6). If a preacher does not feed his own soul on the word of God, he cannot be expected to impart such food unto others. A constant study of the truth is therefore essential. Preachers who preach on current events, book reviews, modern philosophy, etc., are simply distributing the kind of food they partake of themselves. Such preaching would create a famine of God's word. The man who preaches the Bible must feast upon its teachings himself.

Negatively, Paul says that a good minister of Christ must refuse some things. Here he mentions "profane and old wives' fables." The gospel preacher is not to allow himself to walk in the rut of tradition or custom, bound by the prejudices and practices of the generations before, but, on the contrary, is to be led by the authority of Christ in the way he should go. There might be from such sources as mentioned here by Paul some good obtained, but "godliness is profitable for all things." Here is a rule that is altogether good. It includes all the good and none of the unprofitable. Nothing about it can be called in question. There is no danger of any harm resulting at all. Hence "exercise thyself unto godliness."

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From this passage also we learn that the gospel preacher is to teach by example. "Be thou an example." In preaching, conversation, manner of life, love, faith, and sinlessness one who undertakes to preach or teach the Bible must accept the obligation to exemplify what he teaches.

"Give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching." By this is certainly meant both the public and private reading of the word of God. Too little of both is the order of the day. Then note the uses of both teaching and exhortation. Teaching is the foundation upon which the exhortation must rest. They need to be joined together in preaching the Bible. A preacher should not be just an "exhorter," or just a "reasoner," but should undertake to combine both qualities. One is born of conviction in the truth, and the other comes through love for the souls of men.

"Take heed to thyself." Here is an exhortation that all men need to hear. Don't forget your own spiritual development. This is every man's first obligation.

"And to thy teaching." This affects the souls of those who hear. The man who is not careful what he teaches condemns himself and leads astray those who hear him. James says a teacher will receive heavier judgment (James 3:1).

### *I Timothy 5*

In this chapter Paul instructs Timothy how he is to conduct himself in regard to the various classes of people in the church. "Exhort him (the elder) as a father, the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger women as sisters, in all purity." Conduct becoming toward all is the duty and obligation of the preacher.

We learn here that there are certain restrictions to be observed rigidly. The Church is not to obligate itself to care for widows who are not what they should be, or men who will not provide for their own. Some measure of discrimination is necessary or else evil conduct will be condoned. Too, proper regard for elders in the Church is to be remembered. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and teaching" (verse 17). "Against an elder receive not an accusation, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses." All of this Timothy not only was to observe but to teach others to observe likewise.

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"Them that sin reprove in the sight of all, that the rest also may be in fear." Here, evidently, in keeping with other scriptural principles, Paul is talking about an open course of sin continued and persisted in any concerning which all personal obligations have been performed. Another word in our vocabulary setting forth the work of a preacher—"reprove"—gives us a significant duty by him to be performed. Sin cannot be tolerated in the Church of God (I Cor. 5:6, 7).

The last note in this passage as it touches the work of a preacher is "observe those things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality." What an important rule! The preacher is to keep himself free from personal prejudices and preferences. That is difficult for many but imperative in dealing with the souls of men. What one thinks about an individual should neither make him the more ready or reticent in condemning sin, or teaching the truth. The preacher who uses the advantage of the pulpit to give vent to some personal feeling, to give advantage or favor, or to plead personal causes is unworthy of Christian consideration and fellowship.

### *I Timothy 6:3-10*

In this passage' Paul warns preachers against seeking personal gain, desiring to be rich, or loving money. Preachers especially need to be free of such an attitude lest they be influenced in their preaching by what might be profitable or unprofitable. One's own personal profit has no place in the consideration, and should not be allowed to even present itself in connection with the work of preaching. Godliness is not a means of gain and whatever the results are, one should learn to preach the truth at all costs. Contentment is a much needed lesson. This is not saying that a preacher should not have any ambition, or that he cannot take thought for provision for his family. He is under as much obligation to provide for his own' household as anyone (I Tim. 5:8). But when a preacher begins to let personal gain enter into his preaching, he will not long be preaching the truth. He will rather seek the most popular note in order that he may be better received and supported. With such an attitude a man cannot preach the Bible or serve God. "Foolish and hurtful lusts" will drag a man to the bottom and drown him in perdition. Men sometimes think that they cannot afford to preach the truth for it would re-

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quire too much of a personal sacrifice. The fact is that a man cannot afford to preach anything but the truth.

### *I Timothy 6:20*

Paul closes the first letter to Timothy with the appeal, "O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee." Here the idea is that a deposit or trust fund has been left with Timothy, and he is under obligation to prove himself trustworthy by preserving and keeping it. In many ways a preacher is in God's sight a custodian of the truth, the souls of men, and the work of the Lord. This is a great trust and involves serious responsibility. He must prove himself trustworthy.

### *II Timothy 1:6- 8*

"Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee." The figure here is that of blowing or fanning a live coal that a fire may be kindled. Literally the idea is, fan into flame the spark. Improvement, progress, growth, and development is a requirement in Christianity. Paul was earnestly interested in Timothy's continued development. We are all under obligation to develop, not neglect, every endowment we have to God's honor and glory.

"Be not ashamed therefore of the testimony of our Lord." A man who is ashamed of the truth has no business preaching. Yet many men are quite apologetic when they preach certain truths that they think might be offensive to some. God's word needs no apology.

"Suffer hardship." Here is an exhortation not many of us know anything about. Many preachers today have known something of personal privation but none of us has known the enmity, hatred, prejudice, and persecution met by Paul and Timothy and others in New Testament days. There would be a terrible thinning of the ranks of preachers today if such hardships as Paul endured had to be suffered in order to preach the gospel.

### *II Timothy 1:13*

"Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me." Bible truths should be set forth in Bible language. Bible things should be talked about and described in Bible terms. The language of Ashdod can only corrupt. Sectarian and denominational expressions leave false impressions. Error is taught by

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unscriptural expressions even when the truth is in mind. To preach the Bible requires Bible terminology. The truth can be expressed in Bible terms.

### *II Timothy 2:2*

"And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." "Timothy, pass on the torch." The torch in your own hand has been lighted with the truth of God, light the torch in the hands of others who themselves may be able and will be faithful to light still another and another until around the world the glorious light of the gospel of Christ will be seen and from generation to generation it will be passed even unto the end of time.

"To you from falling hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high."  
(John McCrae, "In Flanders Field")

"Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." Here recurs the familiar figure of a warfare. As a soldier in the army of the Lord, Paul exhorted Timothy, "be a good soldier." First of all, in willingness and ability to suffer, and then, in keeping yourself to the task with devotion and refusing to become entangled with affairs of this life. Some of us become so "joined" to human institutions and relationships that we find our hands tied in serving the Lord. Finally, "contend lawfully," that is, according to the rules laid down in the word of God that the crown may be awarded in the last great day.

### *II Timothy 2:14*

"Charging them in the sight of the Lord, that they strive not about words, to no profit, to the subverting of them that hear." Petty bickering and hair-splitting about questions and matters in which no principle of righteousness or truth is involved cannot be edifying. The principle that must not be forgotten is, "Let all things be done unto edifying" (I Cor. 14:26). Contention over questions of no consequence cannot benefit or build up. There is no room in Bible preaching for what the preacher thinks about something. Leave personal opinion, speculation, etc., on untaught and unrevealed questions off and preach the Bible.

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"Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." Here the preacher or teacher is regarded as a workman. God's work is the instrument with which he is laboring. He is charged to give his attention, study and endeavor to using the instrument skillfully so that he might have no reason to be ashamed. The footnote says, "Holding a straight course in the word of truth." Paul was a tent maker accustomed to cutting straight the rough camel-hair cloth used. The figure then is-cut according to the pattern lest the goods be spoiled to your shame. Pride in work well accomplished is pardonable. A crazy-quilt pattern of crookedness and confusion in preaching conflicting doctrines is only bewildering. The cloth needs to be cut straight lest God's pattern be marred and its beauty obscured.

### *II Timothy 2:21*

"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the master's use, prepared unto every good work." God cannot use just any kind of a vessel. When our lives are stained and marred by sin we cannot be vessels unto honor. If a man is to serve God, especially by the preaching of His Word, he must purge himself from these things that defile. The filth of his life must be turned away from, and he must become a sanctified vessel in the house of God. There are two principles involved in the doctrine of sanctification: First, there must be a cleansing or purification; second, there must be a dedication or consecration. In the Old Testament when a vessel was sanctified for use in the temple, it was first cleansed, ceremonially, in accordance with the law, and then it was set apart or dedicated to a specific use. Applied to our lives we see this lesson demanding of us purification of our souls. God can only use those hearts that are pure, and those hands that are clean. We cannot count on God's accepting, using, and blessing us in His service when we have sins that we have not repented of and we stand guilty before God. God's demand is, "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded" (James 4:8). Only the vessel cleansed and consecrated to the service of the Lord is meet or suitable for the Lord's use, and stands in the house of God as a vessel unto honor.

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### *II Timothy 3:14*

"But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." Knowing the source of truth, we should never be willing to turn away therefrom. It is astonishing how and why men can turn away from what they know God has said and accept in its place plain conjecture and human opinion.

"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction,\* for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." A more positive and definite claim than this for the all-sufficiency of God's word could not be stated. There is no need that is not met in the revelation of God. Is sin to be reproved? Turn to the word of God to hear it denounced in terms of plainness and power. For correction of error and false doctrine there is always the needed passage. A false doctrine has never been originated but that in God's word there has been given a plain, positive passage making it utterly impossible. Here is one of its greatest proofs of divinity. No power but divine knowledge could have foreseen all of the error that would be taught through all coming time and prepared a message able to withstand it all. God's word is such a message. For teaching or instruction in the work of righteousness the word is sufficient. There is no excuse for the preacher turning from the word of God to meet any need. It has abundant illustrations for every point of truth. It teaches all men need to know, and furnishes completely every good work. That which the Bible does not teach and has not authorized is not a good work.' It will condemn instead of save. We need to be preachers of the Bible. Its message is all that the world needs in this or any other age. The cry for a new gospel is the cry of infidelity.

'Tis the same old gospel story,  
Just as beautiful and true,  
Just as full of Jesus' power  
As it was when it was new.

### *II Timothy 4*

Having given his own life in service, and standing on the verge of offering it as a sacrifice, Paul sums up all his instructions to



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Timothy in this passage. In a short time he must die, and in Timothy he hoped for the continuation of the great work they had been doing together. All of the passion of the heart of this great preacher for the souls of men and for the kingdom of God is heard in this final charge and plea. A more solemn one was never delivered, a greater mantle of service was never handed to another and greater obligations were never imposed.

"I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: *preach* the word." Here is the supreme obligation. Everything else centers here. "Be urgent in season, out of season." Preach the word. The wisdom of God is revealed in it. It has been written by the Holy Spirit in the very blood of Christ. The grace of God is extended in it. The power of God is exercised through it. ***PREACH THE WORD.***

## CHAPTER VI

### OTHER GREAT TEXTS ON PREACHING

#### *Gal. 1:6- 12*

The Galatians, without due consideration, were turning away from the true gospel to a new gospel which was not worthy to be called a gospel at all. In writing them to warn them against doing so, Paul charges: "Some would pervert the gospel of Christ." There is but one gospel. The separate creeds and doctrines of denominationalism are no part of the true gospel. They are but perversions or counterfeits that draw away disciples from "the simplicity and purity that is toward Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3).

#### NO RIGHT TO CHANGE THE GOSPEL

The curse of heaven is pronounced upon anyone making any change in the gospel. Paul affirms that no man, not even the greatest of the apostles, not even an angel from heaven, could change or alter the gospel which had been preached. It came forth from Christ, and He alone has the power to change it. "But though we or an angel from heaven should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we have preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye have received, let him be anathema." This twice repeated injunction against any change in the message received from the apostles should be deeply impressed. The curse pronounced against any change of any kind is a severe one. It means the fullness of the Lord's wrath and displeasure rests upon the soul of any man who deviates in the least degree from the pattern of preaching set for us by the apostles of Christ.

#### PLEASING MEN

"For if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ." Pleasing men and serving the Lord simply do not go along together. Paul predicted to Timothy that the time would "come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but having itching ears

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will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts." Preachers or teachers who are ear-ticklers must be made to know they are not serving Christ but those to whom they preach. Preach so as to please Christ.

### A CERTIFIED GOSPEL

Paul wanted them to know that the gospel he preached had not been invented by man. He had not imagined it. Others had not conceived it and taught it to him. He certified it or guaranteed it to be the "revelation of Christ." "For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ." The revelation of Christ is all that has divine authority, and all therefore, all that can save, hence it alone should be preached.

### Col. 2:8

In connection with the passage from Gal. 1:1-11, we need to consider the warning Paul gave the Colossians. "Take heed lest there shall be anyone that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy, and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Christ is the standard by which to measure philosophy, and every other teaching. Instead, however, of measuring doctrine and practice by Christ, men are disposed to measure Christ by their doctrines and practices. They reverse the order. The existence of the world depends upon him who is its Lord, and so does our salvation. He must to us then be our measure and standard.

### *I Thess. 2:1*

This passage is significant for a number of things which are pointed out by Paul in it.

First he reminds them that the gospel had been preached unto them and others in the face of severe opposition and great conflict. It had not been without cost. The hardships suffered and sacrifices made certainly indicated its value. Paul, knowing the results and bearing the brunt of the persecution, preached with boldness. He knew God was with him, and he knew the good to be accomplished far outweighed the sacrifice demanded.

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Paul lists a number of "nots" in this message. "Our exhortation is: (1) "Not of error; (2) not of uncleanness; (3) not in guile. For neither at any time were we found using (4) words of flattery, (5) nor a cloak of covetousness, (6) nor seeking glory of men." These tactics which Paul said he did not use are much in evidence today on every hand. The man, however, who uses them is not a Bible preacher.

Then Paul reminds the Colossians of some means he did use to make the gospel effective. He was gentle with them as a nurse with her own children whom she cherishes. He had given them abundant evidence of his deep love for them. He had labored night and day that he might not be a burden to them. He had provided for their spiritual welfare as a father for his children. He had conducted himself holily, righteously, and unblameably toward them.

Paul's purpose as a preacher was to do the great work he had undertaken in such a way as to please God. He knew that unless God was pleased neither his hearers nor himself could be saved.

### *James 3:1*

Teachers shall receive heavier judgment. This solemn fact should challenge the thought of every soul engaged in the effort to teach the word of God. In order to teach, one must know. Unless that knowledge is real and actual, then the thing taught would be misleading and destructive to others. In order to prevent so many who had no wisdom and were unacquainted with God's will from trying to teach, James calls their attention to the fact that teaching involves heavier responsibility because it presupposes knowledge and increased responsibility brings increased judgment (Luke 12:46, 47).

A lawyer must make preparation to practice his profession. A doctor is required to attend special schools of preparation before he can practice medicine. One has to do with property rights and human relations, and the other with physical life, yet, the current notion is that just anyone can preach without any special preparation of any kind. We should remember that he that preaches or teaches is dealing with the greatest thing in the world, the souls of men. If one does not think enough of preaching to prepare for it he does not think enough of it to engage in it.

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### *I Peter 4:11*

"Speak as it were oracles of God." Whenever a man speaks, purporting to give a message from God, he had better be sure that what he is saying is in harmony and accord with the rest of God's utterances. When any man preaches a message out of harmony with something else God has said, it cannot be anything but error.

### *II Peter 2*

The certain judgment of God upon false teachers is pointed out in this chapter by the Apostle Peter. It is surprising how much space in the Scriptures has been given to warnings against false teachers, and pronouncing condemnation upon them. The very emphasis God has given this theme should impress us with the seriousness of such an offense.

Several of the characteristics of false teachers are here pointed out:

(1) They, having forsaken truth and a good conscience, know no limits, and drift even to the denying of the Lord who bought them.

(2) They privily bring in their destructive heresies. Not many false teachers openly introduce their doctrines.

(3) They walk after the flesh, interested in outward things (v. 10).

(4) They resent any restrictions or limitations and condemn dominion and infringing upon personal rights (v. 10).

(5) They make merchandise of the souls of men. Engaging in traffice with souls for their own advantage-not for their salvation.

(6) They inspire themselves with boldness and courage. They have nothing else to sustain them. No truth-no good conscience. The fact they say or think a thing is enough, and they hesitate not to assert themselves as against anybody or anything.

(7) They love the hire of wrong doing as Baalam who turned away from God for the king's reward (v. 13-15).

(8) They utter great swelling words of vanity and seek thus to impress and win others unto themselves (v. 18).

(9) They entice with promises of great liberty while they themselves are enslaved (v. 19).

## A CERTIFIED GOSPEL

### *I John 4*

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God." A childish mind knows no better than to believe just anything that it hears. Men and women should hear with discernment (Acts 17:11). John gives us the test to be applied:

I. Are they willing to confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh? (v. 2, 3). This is the basic, fundamental truth of Christianity. If Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, all that the gospel contains is true. If a man believes this with all his heart, he will believe all that Jesus taught.

To see this test applied we look at the writings of Mary Baker Eddy, "Science and Health," Edition of 1902, page 84: "Jesus as mortal manhood, was not Christ." An orthodox scientist, so called, will not acknowledge that the Divine Word was "made flesh" to dwell among men, and hence the whole system is branded by John as of Satan instead of God.

Again John say: "By this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." By what? Here is the answer and it constitutes Test Number II. "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he Who is not of God heareth us not." When any preacher will not confine himself to the gospel as preached by the apostles he does not know God, and God does not know or recognize him.

### *II John 9.10*

Perhaps this injunction should in strength and directness rank along with Paul's pronouncement of anathema upon anyone preaching any other gospel in Galatians, chapter one.

John tells us here that any teacher who is not satisfied to confine his message to what Christ has taught is condemned. He further states that to encourage one who does not abide in the doctrine of Christ or extend fellowship to him is to become a partaker of his evil works. Frequently we see people who will not themselves stand identified with error but who encourage, support and otherwise fellowship those who do teach error, and yet regard themselves as faithful and loyal to the truth. We need to learn we can have a part in teaching error just as definitely by lending our sympathy and support to those who do teach it as if we were doing so ourselves.

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### *Jude 3*

We are to "contend earnestly" for the faith. The expression here is "epi-agonize." It is the strongest expression in any language to denote intensity of struggle. This is its only appearance in New Testament Scriptures in this form. Jesus said for us to "agonize" to enter the strait gate, but Paul by the Spirit tells us that we are to "epi-agonize" for "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints." Here, then, he has pointed out for us the greatest obligation that any Christian has. God has required of us a greater effort, sacrifice and zeal for the sake of "the faith" being preserved and propagated than for anything else—even our own salvation as individuals. Upon "the faith once for all delivered" depends the salvation of the whole world. Any other faith than the one delivered will not suffice to save any. This faith has been "*delivered unto the saints.*" It is their precious heritage. Not just to keep, but to preach and propagate. God requires that every saint shall be found trustworthy. This "Faith" has been "*delivered once for all.*" It is not to be amplified or enlarged. Divine revelation is complete and sufficient. It is God's perfectly revealed will. There is the false notion in the minds of many that truth needs no defense, and "the faith" does not need our earnest contending. It just so happens that God has settled that question with all who believe by commanding it to be done.

### *Rev. 22:18, 19*

The Apostle John on Patmos Isle was entrusted with the final message of God to the world, the Revelation, or "Apocalypse." Therein through many words, signs, and symbols Christ delivered through John this revelation concerning his Church. When the message was complete and this great apostle was about to write "Finis" across the pages that would forever close God's revealed message to men, the Lord caused him to place upon this message heaven's stamp of divine approval in these words: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18, 19).

## A CERTIFIED GOSPEL

God is satisfied with his word and demands that man must be. This demand is enforced with this most solemn warning against either adding to or subtracting from what God has said. What a solemn warning against trifling with the word of God. What a sublime way of voicing divine approval for the message of this Word which shall forever stand. Read it, believe it, practice it, stand upon it, live by it, preach it, worship and serve according to it, and its promises will be yours in the last great day. May God help us all to so do.



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