

61

Soul - Winning
Sermon Outlines
From Hebrews

By Archie Word

**61 SOUL-WINNING
SERMON OUTLINES
FROM HEBREWS**

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61 SOUL-WINNING SERMON OUTLINES
FROM HEBREWS

and

62 windows to lighten them

by

Evangelist Archie Word

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To my beloved wife of thirty-six years—Florence Belle Word. In appreciation of her faithfulness, wisdom and virtue and the blessing she has been to our family and my life. It has been her strong faith that has been a source of blessing in many times of stress and open battle. I pray that this book will be used of God to raise up men and women of enduring faith in the High Priest of Hebrews.

A. Word

C O N T E N T S

	Page
That Dear Name	1
The God Who Speaks	3
God Revealed In His Son	5
Jesus Superior To Even Angels	7
What Manner Of King Is This?	9
The Father's Care	11
Christian, Watch Your Business!	12
Heedlessness And What We Can Expect	14
Why No Escape For The Neglector?	16
Two Pictures Of Man	17
God's Means Of Enabling Man To Reach His True Goal	19
The Unity Of Christ With His People	21
Deliverance From Three Age-old Scourges	23
Seven Great Lessons In Hebrews, Chapter Two	25
Our Relationship To The Great Christ	27
Highest Appeal To The Hebrew Mind	29
Warning Refused And Its Results	32
God's Prescription, Preventing Backsliding And Apostasy	34
The Hidden Enemy — Unbelief	37
Eight Great Lessons In Chapter Three	39
Our Rest	42
The Unfolding Of God's Perfect Rest	44
A Sure Way To Find Rest	47
The Word Of The Living God	48
Encouragement To Steadfastness	50
We Too, Are Helped	53
Ministerial Musts	55
Paul's High Priest Appeal	57
Irreverence	60
A New Look At Gethsemane	62
Spiritual Dullness	64
The Devil Never Sleeps	67

	Page
The Falling Away From Which There Is No Return	70
God Remembers Our Labors	72
Assurance Of Hope, Through Diligence	75
Jesus, The Worthy Anchor Of The Soul	77
Grass-Roots Sermon	80
God's Priest Supreme	82
Our Priest, Holy, Harmless, Undeified, And Separated From Sinners	85
Paul's Effort To Set The Hebrew Christians Right Concerning The Old Covenant And The New	87
Our High Priest, Not After The Law Of Carnal Commandment	90
The Old And The New Contrasted In Worship	93
Surpassingly Wonderful	95
God's Sacrifice For Man's Sins	98
Death And What Comes After It	100
Sacrifice, Repetition Vs. Sacrifice, Once For All	103
Why The Doom Of The Apostate?	105
God's Prerogative, And Our Choice	108
Looking Back, In Order To Look Ahead	111
Faith And What It Does Through Men	113
Three Giants Of Faith Who Preceded The Flood	116
Father Of The Faithful	118
Three Different Types Of Faith	121
Faith Determines Our Choice	124
Silent Men Of Action	127
A Great Cloud Of Witnesses	129
God's Promised Discipline	132
Two Of God's Authoritative Mandates	135
Two Mountains Related To Jewish Christians	137
Some Finals	140
The Rulers Of The Church	142

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE USE OF THIS BOOK

IN SERMON PREPARATION

If you cannot "preach another man's sermons," perhaps you may find suggestions in the outlines which you can amplify and thus make the sermon "your very own."

AS A STUDY GUIDE

The compilation of Scriptures under these sixty-two topics may be used to assist you in further study and development of the topics for class study, devotional talks, etc.

AS AN ILLUSTRATION BOOK

In each outline there is at least one illustration—"windows" by which the sermon may be illumined. Many of these illustrations can be used in other lessons or sermons.

This book goes forth on the wings of a prayer that dedicated expositors of the Word may find herein inspiration and information which will be used to bring multitudes to the Master of men.

THAT DEAR NAME

Hebrews 1:1 *“God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners . . .”*

INTRODUCTION:

The very first word in this arsenal of Hebrew New Covenant ammunition is the solid rock foundation on which the Old Covenant has been built. The dear ones to whom Paul was writing were believers in Jehovah, the true God. The contents of the entire book prove that it was written to the Hebrews who had accepted Christ as their long expected Messiah but who were being tempted to return to the old dispensational practices.

PROPOSITION: *“Why use this beloved Name to open a new epistle to the Hebrews?”*

I. BECAUSE JEHOVAH WAS THE GOD OF THEIR FATHERS.

1. The law, “Ha Torah,” was the basis of their entire previous revelation. Genesis had announced Him to their minds and held Him before their eyes constantly for 1500 years.

II. BECAUSE JEHOVAH WAS THE GOD WHO HAD MADE THE PROMISE TO FATHER ABRAHAM OF ONE WHO WOULD BE A BLESSING TO ALL THE NATIONS.

1. For nearly two thousand years they had been led in expectancy that the promised Messiah would soon come.
2. The “Hope of Israel” had been spread wherever they had sojourned; in Egypt as well as in Babylon.
3. They knew God kept His promises, because when they had departed from Him, He had punished them just as He had said He would. Cf. Deut. Chapter 28, and Daniel 9:4-10.

III. BECAUSE GOD, JEHOVAH GOD, HAD BEEN THEIR DELIVERER IN TIMES PAST.

1. Abraham, their father in the faith, had been delivered from the idols of Ur. Gen. 12:1-3; Gen. 31:19-30.
2. They, as a nation, had been delivered from Egyptian idolatry by the God of miracles. Cf. Exodus, Chapter 7 through Chapter 20.

IV. BECAUSE JEHOVAH GOD HAD GIVEN THEM THEIR “HOME LAND” BY PROMISE AND MIRACULOUS DELIVERANCE.

1. Father Abraham had first received the promise. Gen. 12:1-4.
2. When they had sinned and found themselves in slavery, it was Jehovah God who had delivered them back to “The Promised Land.”

3. By Jehovah's assistance the walls of Jericho had fallen down flat, and for them, the age old idolatrous inhabitants had been driven out.

V. BECAUSE JEHOVAH GOD MUST BE APPEALED TO, TO ESTABLISH THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE MESSAGE HE WAS ABOUT TO BRING TO THESE WAVERING ISRAELITES.

1. This same God had sent the prophets to help their fathers in times of deep distress and temptation. Example: Jeremiah.
2. This same God's faithfulness was appealed to by Daniel when the time for deliverance had come. Cf. Daniel 9:2; Jeremiah 25:11,12; 29:10.

CONCLUSION:

Paul wrote by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, therefore we know he wrote wisely. This beloved Name of God would be the logical name to appeal to in order to gain an unprejudiced hearing from these age old God Worshipers. He was "The God" of their fathers, and He had been always faithful before this time; the God who had delivered them, given them their home land, and sent to them, in centuries past, many faithful prophets.

For us, this appeal to God is one of the strongest appeals that can be made, i.e. for those of us who know anything about Him. In the opening sentence of the *Declaration Of Independence* there is recognition of God. It closes with the sentence: "And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge," etc. etc. In article 13 of the *Articles of Confederation* can be found the following: "And whereas it hath pleased the Great Governor of the world to incline the hearts of the Legislatures," etc. And the articles end with the words, "Done at" etc., " In the year of our Lord," etc. The Treaty between the United States and Great Britain, 1783, begins with, "It having pleased the Divine Providence to dispose of the hearts," etc. Finally in the words of the President of the convention which framed the Constitution: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens . . . What ever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience forbids us to

expect that National Morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.”

Our forefathers knew about God; they loved God and respected His name and power. They made a great nation. We can appeal to Him too, to frame our lives according to His Mandates, and continue to bless our posterity. Oh brethren, in these days of Communism and Atheism, let us appeal to the God of our Fathers even as Paul appealed to Him when he wanted the hearts of the weakening Israelites to turn to Him. *He is our God!*

THE GOD WHO SPEAKS

Hebrews 1:1—“*God, having of old time SPOKEN unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners . . .*”

INTRODUCTION:

God’s people, to whom this epistle was written, were surrounded by gods of almost every size and color. They had gods of wood, stone, silver and gold. They had gods of life, rain, sunshine, moon, rivers, hills, sex and wine. They were faced with these gods on every side, from morning to night. Some of these gods were internationally famous, and most of them had millions of devotees; however none of them had a god who *SPOKE!!*

PROPOSITION: *Why was it important to emphasize this peculiarity of Jehovah, Israel’s talking God?*

I. BECAUSE THE CONSTANT ASSOCIATION WITH IDOLATRY WOULD TEND TO DULL THEIR MEMORY OF THE LIVING GOD WHO HAD *SPOKEN* TO THEM.

1. The Greeks had their peculiar gods that had been developed by the system of the philosophers’ thinking.
 - a. They had gods of the mind, called egoistic Hedonism, summed up in the Epicurean’s doctrine. They taught that the aim and end of life for every man was his own happiness, which they defined as pleasure.
 - b. Another god of the Mind was Stoicism, prevalent in all Greek speaking countries; a kind of metaphysical teaching that constantly led it’s devotees to become materialistic Pantheists.
 - c. Although the Greeks believed in gods many, they were silent gods, and they gave no written revelation of themselves to the people. When all the world is recognized as

God, it becomes easy to receive and worship any part of it. Early Christians as well as Jews, were in constant peril of being turned aside to gods of the mind.

II. THEY NEEDED TO BE REMINDED OF GOD WHO SPOKE, BECAUSE HE WAS SOON TO GIVE ANOTHER FULLER REVELATION TO THEM.

1. Paul reminds them that God had spoken at *different times*:
 - a. Jehovah God spoke to the first pair in the garden.
 - b. God spoke to Noah in his day about the sinfulness of men.
 - c. God spoke to Abraham promising him a land and a son.
 - d. God spoke to Moses, and led his people out of bondage.
2. Paul reminds them that God had spoken in *divers manners*:
 - a. In thunderings and lightnings at Sinai. Exodus 19.
 - b. In a still, small voice to Elijah. I Kings 19:12.
 - c. In a vision, to Daniel. Daniel chapters 7, 8 and 10.
 - d. In audible tones at the baptism of Jesus. Matthew 3:17.
3. Paul reminds them that the prophets had many times been the voice of God to Israel.
 - a. Moses came, saying, "I AM hath sent me." Ex. 3:10-16.
 - b. The word of the Lord came to Nathan. II Sam. 12:1.
 - c. Micaiah said, "What the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak." I Kings 22:14.
 - d. Jeremaih's speech: "Then the word of the Lord came unto me." Jeremiah 1:4.

CONCLUSION:

This prodding of their memories regarding the God of heaven and earth, who speaks, would call them back from gods of the Philosopher's minds as well as from their idols. This Paul did by reminding them of the many and various ways the Lord had spoken in the past to guide them in the paths of righteousness.

No greater illustration of the "Speaking God" could be brought to the minds of these religious Jews than that of Jeremiah. God had spoken through Jeremiah to tell Israel that they would be taken away into Babylon for seventy years. (Jeremiah 25:11) Their history had shown that God spoke the prophetic truth when it seemed most improbable of fulfillment. God said after seventy years He would bring them back to their home land. They knew of the return from Babylon under Zerubbabel and Nehemiah. They knew of the Persian king's blessing and support to help them cross the enemies territory and rebuild the city of God. They could recall

what the "Talking God" had said to Daniel about the fall of Babylon, when she was acclaimed as impregnable. They could remember the rise of the Medes and Persians to overthrow Babylon when previous to this time they were no threat to the power of Babylon at all. They could recall God's speaking many years before there was any threat from Macedonia, about the "Brazen Soldiers" like the "fast moving he-goats that hardly touched the ground." They knew their histories well enough to corroborate what the "Speaking God" had said about His kingdom being divided among four men, and out of one of them would come forth a great persecutor of his people. They had seen the indescribable Beast arise and crush all opposition and fulfill to the most minute detail, the words of the God who was proven true.

Paul appeals to this God. As long as men live on this old mundane sphere surrounded by gods of philosophy, wood and stone, we can just as assuredly appeal to Him, for He not only speaks, but He speaks the truth.

In the storm of international life that we must endure and in which we must bring up our children, we need some one higher than the secretary of the United Nations; some one with greater power than Russia with its might of multiple megatons of atomic distintegration. We need the God who speaks and tells us not only of His power and everlasting deity, but also of His great love for us, as poor fallen and undone sinners. His love of which He has spoken is just as sure as any word He has given relative to the past or the future. Praise God, we know the "Speaking God" and we know He has spoken of our Salvation!

GOD REVEALED IN HIS SON

Hebrews 1:2; John 1:14 *"Hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds;"*

INTRODUCTION:

In God's revelation to man there is a continual development and advancement from the lower to the higher. He has spoken in times past via visions, speech to individuals, miracles and prophets, but now comes the finest and highest of His divine revelation of His will to man. It is in His only begotten Son; diversification becomes personification.

PROPOSITION: *Some things the Son reveals about God, The Only God.*

I. HE REVEALS HIS PERSON.

1. His eternal being. John 1:1-2.
2. His Faithfulness. Fulfilling the promise from Gen. 3:15; Gen. 12:1-2; Isa. 7:14; Isa. 9:6-7
3. His very appearance. John 14:8-11

II. HE REVEALS GOD'S WILL.

1. He reveals God's will relative to Salvation. I Tim. 2:3; John 3:16; He was God's gift for our Salvation. Rom. 6:23
2. He reveals God's Righteousness. Matt. 3:15; Rom. 3:21-22
3. He reveals God's will relative to Holiness: Heb. 12:14; Romans 1:4; John 5:14; John 15:19

III. HE REVEALS THE PURPOSE OF GOD.

1. That through Him might come salvation. John 3:17; Luke 19:10; I Cor. 1:30; I Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:23; Phil. 3:20.
2. That through Christ salvation should come to the Gentiles. Luke 24:47; Fulfilling Malachi 1:11; Acts 10:34-39; Rom. 1:5 and 14-15; Rom. 3:22 and 29-30.
3. That through Him might come final victory. I Cor. 15:50-58; I Thess. 4:13-18

IV. HE REVEALS THE POWER OF GOD.

1. In His miracles that dealt with matter and force. Mark 4:35-41
2. In His miracles that dealt with demons, epilepsy, palsy and other diseases. Matt. 4:24-25
3. In His miracles that overcame death. Luke 7:11-17; John Chapter 11; Luke 8:41 and 49-55

CONCLUSION:

Many years ago Dr. William Spurgeon of Wales was lecturing in a large city of Scotland. Hundreds of those who had heard him waited to meet him after the services and among them was an elderly gentleman of fine appearance and polished manners. As he approached he simply said, "Dr. Spurgeon, I am glad to meet you. I am the father of Henry Drummond."

"Oh," said Dr. Spurgeon, "Then I already know you, for I know your son as well."

That is somewhat the way we will feel on the great day when we face Jehovah the eternal God. We will feel as though we know

Him, because we are acquainted with Him, so very well, by knowing His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, God in the flesh. John 14:9.

Then shall we see fully that in His person dwelt the Godhead bodily. Then we will know far better than we do here, how far he surpasses all the theophanies that preceded Him. He was God in the flesh, giving us a glimpse of God himself.

JESUS SUPERIOR TO EVEN ANGELS

Hebrews 1:14 *“having become by so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they.”*

INTRODUCTION:

JESUS came out from the gates of eternity to show us the Father. He walked the paths of men for a little while, to show us the way; gathered up the broken strands of human character and life and then went back to His eternal home. By His visit he made it possible for us to know the Father, get a glimpse of Heaven and learn to love the earth less and heaven more.

PROPOSITION: *Jesus is better than the angels.*

I. HE IS BETTER IN THAT HE IS THE CREATOR OF ANGELS.

1. “All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made.” John 1:3.
 - a. Col. 1:16 “for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him and unto him:”

We conclude that the Creator is greater than any portion of His creation, or the sum total of it. Angels are only a part of His creation.

II. HE IS BETTER THAN THE ANGELS IN THAT THEY WERE INSTRUCTED TO SERVE HIM.

1. Heb. 1:6 “And when he again bringeth in the first born into the world he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.”

We are convinced that the lesser serves the greater.

III. HE IS BETTER THAN THE ANGELS IN THAT HE HAS INHERITED A MORE EXCELLENT NAME THAN THE ANGELS.

1. Heb. 1:4. "having become by so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they."
2. He is 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. That includes angels.

IV. HE IS BETTER THAN THE ANGELS IN THAT HE IS GIVEN OF GOD, HIGHER RECOGNITION.

1. He, and He alone is spoken of as being "heir of all things."
2. He, and He alone is the very effulgence of His glory, and the image of His substance. Heb. 1:3.
3. He only is upholding all things by the word of His power. Heb. 1:3
4. He only has made purification of sins. Heb. 1:3
5. He only has been given the authority to sit down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Heb. 1:3.

CONCLUSION:

No wonder we say He is better, superior to the angels. No wonder Renan said, "All history is incomprehensible without Christ." He is the condescension of divinity and the exaltation of humanity to the place above angels.

The artist had painted a picture of the Last Supper, putting his best effort into the work. Indeed he had lavished time and pains and love upon it, working out every detail with the greatest care. Even the cup that stood on the table was painted with as much perfection as the more important parts of the picture. It was a wonderful cup, richly set with jewels that held the light in their ruby depths, so cunningly were they wrought.

When this great picture was hung in the gallery for inspection, the artist hid himself behind it to hear the public's comment. "What a wonderful cup." "How it sparkles." "The cup must be made of gold and precious stones!" "Such a cup was never painted before."

Out from his hiding place came the truly religious artist and with a few well directed strokes he painted out the cup, to the dismay of the onlookers. In its place he drew a common cup of dull colored clay.

The people remonstrated with him, saying, "Why did you destroy the jeweled cup?"

He replied sadly, "Because it did not fulfill its purpose. I made the cup beautiful because it was for the Master's use, and nothing

can be too rich or too carefully wrought for Him. But if the eyes of the world are holden by the beauty of the jewels so they can not see the face of the Lord Jesus beyond, the goodly cup must be sacrificed."

Every piece of creation must serve Him; every created being must be made to serve Him; and when they all fall down to worship Him we conclude that Jesus is far better than the angels.

WHAT MANNER OF KING IS THIS?

Hebrews 1:8-13

INTRODUCTION:

Great and small kings of the earth have been coming and going from the time men began recording history. Kings of today will probably not be kings of tomorrow. If ever there was a time when crowns sit shaky on the heads of Monarchs it is now. But this king Jesus, about which Paul here speaks, is King eternal. He is not like Saul, David and Solomon, king for forty years and then gone to be with their fathers; He is king forever co-reigning with His Father.

PROPOSITION: *What variety of person is this King eternal?*

I. HE IS MINISTERED TO BY ANGELS.

1. Most kings choose the very best citizens of their kingdom to wait upon them, but this King is ministered to by angels. Hebrews 1:7.
2. For court heralds this king uses angels. Revelation 18:1-2; Rev. 22:16; Rev. 10:1-2.

II. HE MAKES THE WIND, TO CARRY HIS MESSAGES.

A king's messengers must be strong and dependable, so when God set up the kingdom for His Son, He made the winds His messengers. Winds have defeated invincible Armadas; destroyed cities and millions of acres of crops, yet this king is mighty enough to harness the winds, and make them serve Him.

III. FIRE, MAN'S GREAT FRIEND WHEN RIGHT AND WORST ENEMY WHEN WRONG, BECOMES A SERVANT OF THIS KING.

1. "Fire and hail, snow and vapor stormy wind, fulfilling his word." Psalms 148:8. He even made the sun do his bidding, Josh. 10:12-13; and the lightning, II Sam. 22:15.

Only those who have been in a tremendous lightning storm can appreciate the fearsomeness of God's messenger in this field.

IV. HE IS A KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. Heb. 1:9.

1. Even His "type" was named Melchizidek, "King of righteousness." Heb. 7:2.
2. This was one phase of His character about which the prophets spoke. Isa. 32:1.
3. Jeremiah had said He would be one who would execute justice, and He should be called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Jere. 23:5-6.

With Him, His righteousness caused Him to rejoice in gladness, and He has made it possible for us to rejoice in happiness if we are willing to walk obediently before Him.

V. HE IS AN *ETERNAL* KING.

1. All other kings lives come to an end, and with death comes the end of their reigns. Some kings have reigned very short periods, but this King reigns eternal. Heb. 1:11-12.
2. Other kings in time are overcome by their enemies or by death, but this one is to sit on the right hand of God until all His enemies are destroyed. Heb. 1:13.
3. Dan. 2:44 tells us His kingdom is never to be destroyed, but it shall break and consume all other kingdoms, and it shall live forever.
4. It was prophesied of Him that "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

CONCLUSION:

It is no wonder that we sing, "Bring forth the royal diadem and crown Him Lord of all." Handel builds around the coronation of the Lord the great Hallelujah chorus that has been sung around the world. "In infancy He startled a king; in boyhood He puzzled the doctors, in manhood He walked upon the billows, and hushed the sea to sleep. He healed the multitudes without medicine, and made no charge for his services. He never wrote a book, yet not all the libraries of the country could hold the books that could be written about Him. He never wrote a song, yet He has furnished the theme of more songs than all song writers combined. He never founded a college, yet all the schools together cannot boast of as many students as He has. Great men have come and gone, yet He lives on forever. Death could not destroy Him, the grave could not hold Him," so said Forman Linicome.

Surely He is the King of all kings, and Lord of all lords, forever, with the universe for His dominion, and having part of His subjects who have crossed the flood and part of them still lingering here to serve Him. He is King eternal.

THE FATHER'S CARE

Hebrews 1:14: "*Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?*"

INTRODUCTION:

It is well for us to remember that while God delights in that which to us is a boundless dominion, He never does forget, even in the most trying times, the weakest of his human subjects who put their trust in Him. He, so different from the old Idols of the pagans, is a God who cares "for His own."

PROPOSITION: *How do we know He is a Father that cares?*

I. HE HAS DEFINITELY STATED THAT HE DOES CARE.

Deut. 31:8

1. He maketh the sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and He sendeth the rain upon the just and the unjust. Matt. 5:45.
2. "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee." Josh. 1:5
3. Luke 6:36 "Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

II. HE SEES OUR TEARS. Rev. 7:17 and 21:4.

1. As is illustrated in Gen. 21:12-20.—
2. As is illustrated in Daniel 9:3-19. God heard and answered.
3. As is illustrated in Acts 9:39-42.

III. HE HEARS OUR PRAYERS, AND ANSWERS AS A LOVING FATHER.

1. Matthew 18:19 is God's promise. (John 14:13)
2. "This is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us; I John 5:14.
3. David had this relationship by experience. Psalms 3:4

IV. EVEN IN OUR DEATH, WE ARE PRECIOUS IN HIS SIGHT. Rev. 14:13 and 20:4

1. The Christian can say: "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" I Cor. 15:55.
2. Our Father who cares has made provision for our comfort when our loved ones go from us. I Thess. 4:13-18
3. God who loves us has assured us of final victory. Rev. 15:2-4

CONCLUSION:

The God who cannot lie has promised His love and care for us, demonstrating it many times in the Old Testament and the New. He promises to hear our prayers when troubles come, and has given us the beautiful vision of victory, in the Revelation granted to John.

A young lady of some sixteen years, who had been blind from birth suddenly had her vision restored by surgery. During all her years of darkness she had been tenderly cared for by her father. Upon her return to her home she took particular delight in looking at her father. He was a man of fine appearance and bearing. His every look and motion was observed by the daughter with keenest delight.

For the first time she realized what his constant tenderness had meant to her. He now seemed real, where before he seemed to be shadowy. If he caressed her or even looked upon her kindly, it brought tears of gladness to her eyes.

"To think," she said, holding his hand closely in her own, "that I have had this father all these years, and never knew him!"

Oh, how many are like that in their relationship to their heavenly Father? He has tenderly cared for them for years, but their eyes are blinded. What a sad awakening, if they wait until they come face to face with God at the judgment. Then they will see Him in His great power, justice and unswerving righteousness. What a pity they do not come to know Him, our God who cares for us right here on this old earth, every day, as a loving Father.

CHRISTIAN, WATCH YOUR BUSINESS!

WHY WE OUGHT TO GIVE THE MORE EARNEST HEED

Hebrews 2:1 *"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them."*

INTRODUCTION:

"Therefore" shows that this is a conclusion drawn from the arguments introduced in the previous chapter. God's revelation is almost always continued from what has preceded; conclusions are based on firm foundations well laid previously. God knows our human frailties, and in His great love for us, he carefully explains the intricate manoeuvres of life in the simplest terms, and then

he explains those over and over. He knows that repetition is the fundamental law of pedagogy.

PROPOSITION: *Why we ought to give the more earnest heed'*

**I. WE OUGHT TO GIVE THE MORE EARNEST HEED
BECAUSE GOD HAS SPOKEN.**

1. When the King speaks, his subjects pay attention.
2. When a President speaks, the citizens listen.
3. When the General of the army speaks every soldier heeds.
God, the Christians General, President and King, has spoken.

**II. WE OUGHT TO GIVE THE MORE EARNEST HEED
BECAUSE GOD HAS SPOKEN TO US FACE TO FACE
AND HAS HAD IT RECORDED.**

1. It was a personal message delivered in person. Gen. 2:18-24.
2. He condescended to speak with his disobedient creation. Gen. 3:9-19
3. He loved us and washed away the wicked generation, and then extended to us hope in Noah. Gen. 6: through 9:

**III. WE OUGHT TO GIVE THE MORE EARNEST HEED
BECAUSE OF THE LONG LIST OF ILLUSTRIOUS AND
FAITHFUL PROPHETS.**

1. Moses Deut. 18:15
2. Samuel I Sam. 8:10-18. Certainly proved true.
3. Elijah I King Chapter 17 through 19:18

**IV. WE OUGHT TO GIVE THE MORE EARNEST HEED
BECAUSE THE LORD HAS SPOKEN TO US IN HIS SON.**

1. This Son is the Lord Jesus Christ, Israel's long promised Messiah, who is King in His eternal kingdom.
2. He has warned us that all terrestrial things will fail.
3. He is our close companion in this life of trials. Matt. 28:20
4. He is our Saviour from all sins. Luke 9:56 and 19:10

CONCLUSION:

Germes did not come to us and say "Here we are, and if you will heat us to 212 degrees for five minutes we will be dead and harmless." We had to find that out by research.

Atoms did not cry out, "Oh weak man, here right in your presence is power almost unlimited by the simple process of separation." No, we had to dig that out.

Metals and motors did not come to our factories and advertise that "Aviation is a possible means of transportation that is superior to all other known means." We had to experiment, lose lives and millions of dollars to find it out.

But wonders of wonders, the God who made every germ, created every atom, and knew about flying through the air long before man ever dreamed of it, is the God who knew that we could never find out the great and invisible qualities of His glorious self, unless He told us, was so good as to reveal Himself to us in His Son; speak to us through His word, and demonstrate His love for us on Calvary.

We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have had the privilege of hearing, lest we, at any time should slip back unto perdition.

HEEDLESSNESS AND WHAT WE CAN EXPECT

Hebrews 2:2-3

INTRODUCTION:

It is an undeniable fact that we benefit from the mighty Gospel of God, only in proportion to what we remember of it. The two damning sins of all ages have been *heedlessness* and *forgetfulness*, and they both have their roots in one thing—*Selfishness*. Thinking of our own interests, causes us to fail to heed the warnings of our Father, and of the prophets He so lovingly sent, as well as the tender and fearful words of His own dear Son.

Paul declares that we are saved by the Gospel, providing we keep it perpetually in our memories. I Cor. 15:1-5. Forgetfulness brings heedlessness. God exhorts us to be earnest; intense!

PROPOSITION: *What can we expect if we do not heed His warnings?*

I. WE CAN EXPECT GOD TO KEEP HIS WORD RELATIVE TO LAW BREAKERS.

1. The beloved David was not spared when he had sinned against Uriah. II Sam. 12:1-14
 2. The great warrior, King Saul, paid with his life for his sin of disobedience. I Sam. 15:3 and Vs 9:23; and then see the horrible results in I Sam. 31:1-6.
 3. The wisest of men, the erudite Solomon, did not heed God's warning, and suffered awful consequences. I King 11:1-12
- Men, even great men, forget God's warnings, but God keeps His word without fail.

II. WE CAN EXPECT GOD TO KEEP HIS WORD THAT HE HAS SPOKEN, RELATIVE TO *OUR* BREAKING HIS LAW, NOW.

1. Even churches founded by the apostles were warned against sinning, and forwarned of the results of failure. Gal. 5:19-21
2. The Christians in the district of Galatia were warned that if they departed from the Gospel — followed after another fake gospel — they would be anathematized. Gal 1:6-9 There will be no exceptions for our day.
3. Hebrew Christians were warned concerning the penalty for trampling underfoot the blood of Christ. Heb. 10:28-29 Greater blessings incur greater responsibilities. Luke 12:48
4. The loving Jesus has warned and exhorted us of the fate that awaits those who refuse God's pardon and stubbornly rebel against God's commands. II Thess. 1:7-10

CONCLUSION:

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation only as we understand it and hold on to it; heedlessness and forgetfulness will not excuse us when we stand before Him who has spoken. He keeps His word. Man fails, but God never does, both in His rewards and in His punishments.

God has spoken; there is a great day coming. He keeps His word. All men and women who have lived from the first pair to the last son or daughter born will be there together, and take their respective places at the great judgment. High and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned will then be distinguished only by their vices and virtues as measured by the Word of God. The injured virgin, the afflicted widow, and the oppressed orphan shall then see those, face to face, who have spoiled them of their innocence, their reputation or their substance.

At the judgment, men will meet all those who have deceived them, and all that they have deceived and led into sin. There will be those there also whom we have directed into paths of uprightness. From the former we shall turn away in shame and fear; the latter we will behold with joy and satisfaction. At the judgment, men will understand the standards of God's righteous ones, where on earth they ridiculed them. Then they will wonder why they did not see it before. They will then see the foolishness of leaving Christ, the Saviour, out of their lives.

At the judgment there will not be one idle or unconcerned spectator; not one that shall have leisure to trouble himself with the affairs of someone else. Every man will have his cause heard, and the Lord will keep His word. I John 5:11-12; Mark 16:16.

WHY NO ESCAPE FOR THE NEGLECTOR?

Hebrews 2:3 *“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?”*

INTRODUCTION:

Neglecting salvation is one of the universal curses of mankind. It makes no difference what class he is in, the sinner neglects salvation; self-righteous man, infidel, blasphemer, pagan, or procrastinator, they all come under this condemnation. However, the specific ones addressed here are not the “Outsiders” but the “Insiders.” Paul is speaking to Christians! How many millions of church members ignore the gospel appeal for Christian service, and allow the love of the world and their own sinful hearts to refuse to walk in the “Highway of holiness?” These Hebrews were being tempted to return to Judaism. We are tempted to return to our past lives, too. Therefore Paul warns all the followers of the Lord in every land, and until Jesus returns, of the jeopardy in which they place themselves, if they neglect this great Salvation. PROPOSITION: *“Why is there no escape if we neglect this great salvation?”*

I. BECAUSE IT WAS AT THE FIRST SPOKEN BY THE LORD; THAT IS, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF.

1. First it was spoken concerning Jesus. Matt. 1:21 and Luke 1:35
2. Then it was spoken by the Lord himself. John 3:16-21 and 31-36; Luke 19:10; John 5:40; Mark 16:15-16.
3. Then He demonstrated His power to forgive sin. Luke 5:20-26; Matt. 9:2-8; Luke 7:47-50; and He challenged them to *believe* because of His *WORKS*. John 10:37-38

II. BECAUSE IT WAS CONFIRMED UNTO US BY THEM THAT HEARD.

1. Jesus promised supernatural power to the apostles. John 14:12-14; Mark 16:17-20
2. They demonstrated that power to confirm their message. Acts 3:1-16 and 4:10; Acts 5:12-14; Acts 8:6-8; Acts 9:33-35; Acts 13:9-12; Acts 14:3; and 8-11; Rom 15:17-19; I Cor. 2:4-5

III. BECAUSE OF THE CONTENT OF THIS MESSAGE.

1. Other revelations had dealt with law and prophecies, while this dealt with Salvation; “Great Salvation.”
2. Other revelations had dealt with salvation from bondage,

salvation nationally, and for the duration of human life, but this one dealt with SALVATION from sins. Damnation which curses forever. I Tim. 1:13-16; Titus 2:11; I Jon. 2:25

3. Other revelations had dealt with future events in the life of Israel, but this revelation dealt with heaven for all of God's redeemed. Matt. 25:34; Jon. 14:2-3; Eph. 1:18; II Tim. 2:10-12; Jas. 1:12; Rev. 3:21

CONCLUSION:

Notice, at the time Paul was speaking, the Great Salvation message *had been* confirmed by those that heard, by the signs and wonders. He appeals to it as an established fact, not one that was still being confirmed at that time.

One April night a mammoth ocean liner went crashing upon the coast of Nova Scotia. There was all the confusion of a wreck at sea, the hopeless cries of men, women and children, the hurrying to and fro, the frantic shouts of officers; and added to all this turmoil and bewilderment was the hoarse cry of the tempest, the surging of the giant waves, and the roar of the breakers. Between the rocks where the vessel struck and the shore of safety, was a chasm about one hundred yards wide. A rope was shot from the shore by the coast guard to span the chasm of death, and by this line many of the stranded souls successfully struggled to the shore.

It was their *only* means of salvation. Had they neglected that one rope, there was absolutely no hope.

Dear friend, had you been there, would you not have pressed aside all possibilities of danger and cried, "Let me grasp it?" There was no escape except by the rope. There is no escape except by Christ!

TWO PICTURES OF MAN

Hebrews 2:6-8

INTRODUCTION:

Miracles were performed for the benefit of MAN. They were to substantiate the message that they presented in words. The miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was for MAN'S benefit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit, given to the apostles was not for conversion, but to inspire them to proclaim an infallible message for the benefit of MAN-KIND to all subsequent generations. Notice that these miracles and gifts were

not conferred on ANGELS, but on MEN, a dignity that the highest archangel might well have coveted.

In verses six and eight we have a two-fold estimate of MAN: the human and the Divine.

PROPOSITION: "*What is man? from two prospective observations.*"

I. WHEN DAVID STEPPED OUT INTO THE JUDEAN HILLS ON A STARRY NIGHT AND SURVEYED THE HEAVENS, LOOKING FROM THE STARS TO THEIR CREATOR, HE SAID, "WHAT IS MAN THAT THOU ART MINDFUL OF HIM?"

1. IN COMPARISON WITH THE GREATNESS OF THE UNIVERSE, MAN IS TRULY NOTHING.

(1) He is nothing in size. cf Astronomy.

cf. Mountains, Oceans.

(2) He is nothing in strength. cf. Monkeys; Apes.

cf. Elephants; Whales.

(3) He is nothing in natural wisdom. cf. Baby calf with a baby child.

(4) He is nothing in speed. Cf. light.

(5) He is nothing in natural equipment. cf. Animals can foretell the coming of a storm.

Man, by God's grace, was given dominion of THIS world.

II. WHEN GOD SENT HIS SON INTO THIS WORLD, WE HAVE A SECOND ESTIMATE OF MAN. IN HIM THE WEAKEST DISCIPLE IS TO BECOME CONQUEROR OF ALL THINGS HERE AND HEREAFTER.

1. Through Him Paul could say, "I can do all things in HIM that strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13; 2 Cor. 12.9; Eph. 3: 14.19.

2. Through Him we have the promise that no temptation can take us. I Cor. 10:13.

3. In Revelation He is pictured as victor over death, Hades, the dragon, the beast, the false prophet and the men who worship the beast. He is victorious, hence every man in Him is victorious also.

4. In Christ, even the death of His Saints is precious. Rev. 14:13.

5. When death comes to the Christian, he goes to be with the Lord. Phil. 1:21-23.

CONCLUSION:

The first man given dominion over the earth was a failure! No wonder David asked, "What is man?" But the second man, Christ Jesus, makes his relationship to the Heavenly things seem natural.

The greatest of men fade into obscurity in the presence of Jesus. A number of prominent literary men were assembled in a club-room in London one day, a few years ago. The conversation veered to a discussion of some of the illustrious figures of the past, and one of the company said, "Gentlemen, what would we do if Milton were to enter this room?"

"Ah" replied one of the circle, "we would give him such an ovation as might compensate for the tardy recognition accorded him by the men of his own day."

"And if Shakespeare entered?" queried another.

"We would arise and crown him master of song," was the answer.

"And if Jesus Christ were to enter?" asked another.

"I think," said Charles Lamb amid an intense silence, "we would all fall on our faces at His feet."

GOD'S MEANS OF ENABLING MAN TO REACH HIS TRUE GOAL

Hebrews 2:8-9

INTRODUCTION:

The writer never loses sight of the Lord Jesus Christ. How easy it would be for us to be victorious if we kept Him in focus always in every situation and problem of life. When we lose sight of Him, we pollute our lips with filth and drift on with the thoughtless multitude. "We see now, not all things subject unto him," but how different it would be if they were. He is the rightful "Captain of our salvation," and through his death he has led millions unto life and victory. He leads the grandest army ever marshalled on the fields of time; in heaven the shining battalions at His command instantly stand in battle array.

PROPOSITION: *Jesus is God's means of enabling man to reach his true goal.*

I THE SON OF GOD HAS TAKEN UPON HIMSELF THE FORM OF MAN AND HIS NATURE.

Heb. 2:9. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels."

1. Jesus has taken upon Himself human nature. Phil. 2:5-8; John 1:14; Gal. 4:4; Romans 8:3.

II IN HIS HUMAN NATURE, HE ENDURED DEATH.

1. He prophesied that he would die for his sheep. John 10:11; 10:15 and 17.
2. He tell us why he must die. John 11:50-52.
3. All of the Gospels tell of his death for sinners.
4. His death was voluntary. John 10:15-18 and Chapter 11; Mk 10:45.

III THE DEATH OF CHRIST WAS FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL MEN.

1. He was to taste death for every man. Heb. 2:9 (On behalf of)
2. This HE explained to Nicodemus in John 3:14-18.
3. This death was attributed to the Grace of God. Heb. 2:9. (Unmerited kindness of God, the offended Deity) Titue 3:4.

IV ON ACCOUNT OF HIS ENDURANCE OF DEATH HE HAS BEEN RAISED TO SUPREME GLORY AND AUTHORITY Heb. 2:9.

1. Paul emphasizes this in Philippians 2:8-9 and Matt. 28:18.
2. It was for this Glory that He endured the cross. Heb. 12:2.

V. HE HAS BEEN EXALTED TO THIS SUPREME POSITION AS HEAD OF HUMANITY.

1. God raised Him to the throne not as an angelic being, but in human form. Acts 7:56. (Stephen saw Him.)
2. Peter preached Him as such. Acts 5:31.
3. Paul makes this clear in I Cor. 15:24-28.

CONCLUSION:

It is our only hope to believe in Him, trust him and depend on him. He has asked us to repent of our sins and be baptized in his name for the remission of our sins. In this way we can acquire for ourselves what He died to purchase for us.

Montmorency, constable of France, having served his country faithfully, came to face death which he knew to be inevitable. He was exhorted to die with the same courage which he had shown in his long life of public service. To this he replied, "Gentlemen and fellow citizens, I thank you all very kindly for your anxious care and concern about me; but the man who has been enabled to endeavor to live well for four score years past, can never need

to seek now how to die well for a quarter of an hour. But observe, my having been enabled to endeavor to live well is not the ground of my dependence; no, my SOLE dependence is on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is by the grace of God, revealed through Him, that I am now what I am, and my hopes for the future are all in Him and the sacrifice He has made for me."

God, through Christ, has made a way, enabling man to reach his true goal, heaven.

THE UNITY OF CHRIST WITH HIS PEOPLE

Hebrews 2:11-13

INTRODUCTION:

As explained in Verse 10, He reached the throne of His glory through self-denial, physical pain and mental anguish; do we think there is any more pleasant or shorter road for us? Jon 15:20; Matt. 10:24-25. We are to have fellowship, partnership, and our share with Him, as our Master and Lord, if there is to be "Unity" with Him. This is emphasized in I John 1:3.

PROPOSITION: *In what practical ways are we united with Christ?*

I WE ARE TO BE UNITED WITH HIM IN ONE HEART.

1. He so loved the world, He was willing to come in the form of man, and die for sinners. John 3:16 and Phil. 2:8; so we ought to love one another even as Christ loved us: John 13:34-35; 15:12 and verse 17; Rom. 12:9-10.
2. This Christ-like heart, will cause us to consider the weak. Romans 15:1-2; 14:19; I Cor. 10:24. Following after love. I Cor. 14:1, Gal. 6:2, and Phil. 2:4.

II WE ARE TO BE UNITED WITH CHRIST IN ONE MIND.

1. We will have that mind in us which was also in Christ Jesus. Phil. 2:5-8; only in this way can we have the same mind. I Cor. 1:10.
2. His mind served God exclusively. Matt. 22:37 and if we are united with Him, our whole mind will be loving God.
3. We will have His laws in our minds. Heb. 8:10; 2 Cor. 3:3. In that way we serve Him. Rom. 7:25 (Mind).
4. His mind in us makes us willing servants. 2 Cor. 8:12; Elders, God's "high standard" men, served in this way. I Peter 5:2.

III WE ARE TO BE UNITED WITH CHRIST IN *LIFE*.

Rom. 6:8-14.

1. Christ lives in us. Gal. 2:20.
2. He lives by His Spirit. John 3:3-5; and Romans 8:9-11.
3. We have "Put on Christ" and we are "In Christ." Gal. 3:26-27.

IV WE ARE TO BE UNITED WITH HIM, *SHARING EVERY MATERIAL BLESSING*.

1. Every gift we have, we *received* of Him, therefore we ought to minister it among ourselves, sharing. I Peter 4:10; James 2:14-18. Remembering their source. Jas. 1:17.
2. To be of service is the reason he begat us. James 1:18; Rom. 6:16-18; I Cor. 6:20.
3. Every blessing He has bestowed on us is to be used to further the kingdom, assisting those in distress. I Cor. 16:1-3; II Cor. 8:1-5; cf. 8:9.
4. Paul warns those who might try to "chisel" and cheat. II Cor. 9:6-8.

CONCLUSION:

Being united with Him here in this life assures us that we will be united in the place He has gone to prepare for us. John 14:1-11.

The president of one of the largest banks in New York City, told some friends that after he had served for several years as an office boy in the bank, over which he now presides, the old president called him into his office one day and said, "I want you to come into my office and be with me." The young man asked, "What do you want me to do?" "Never mind that," said the president, "you will learn about your duties soon enough. I just want you to be here with me." "That was the most memorable moment in my life," said the aging bank president.

That is Jesus' invitation to every person, "I want you to be here with me." He made the pilgrimage to this old sin-cursed earth, leaving the courts of the very God, in order that we might be invited to be with Him in heaven forever. That should be the most memorable event in our lives, because *in Him*, here, we enjoy every blessing to the fullest, and then when this old life has come to a victorious conclusion, we go out to be with the Lord and in eternal glory. Matt. 25:34.

DELIVERANCE FROM THREE AGE OLD SCOURGES

Hebrews 2:14-18

INTRODUCTION:

Herein is revealed God's means of deliverance; the office of the Priest-hood. During the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, frail and weak men were made priests by sanctification. Jesus, in order to become a priest, took on himself our physical nature, God incarnate, to minister to our necessities. The kingdom of heaven here, is simply the Kingdom of God let down to human comprehension level. Taking a body like our own, Jesus became a participator in the life of necessities, that we experience daily.

PROPOSITION: *Jesus came to deliver us from three age-old scourges.*

I HE CAME TO BRING TO NAUGHT HIM THAT HAD THE POWER OF DEATH.

1. Christ assumed the form of man, that he might suffer death. Phil. 2:1; John 1:14.
2. His death was of stupendous importance. He looked forward to it. He preannounced it. Luke 24:26; Matt. 26:28.
3. He voluntarily advanced it. John 12:24.
4. He prophesied that by his death he would overcome the one who is the author of death. John 12:31; 16:11.
5. Paul says "that He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

II. HE CAME TO BRING DELIVERANCE FOR ALL THOSE WHO FEAR DEATH.

1. Man has always looked upon death as having a sting. I Cor. 15:55.
2. The devil kindles the passions that lead to death; anger and revenge, often leading to murder, and then he causes the sinner to be very fearful. He knows he is condemned! Heb. 10:29.
3. Christ died to make the power of Satan in this realm ineffective. "O Death Where is Thy Victory?"
 - a. This He does by giving the Believer hope in His promises of life beyond the grave, as demonstrated. Rev. 1:17-18.
 - b. There is no more doubt concerning life after death.
 - c. No more fear of painful separation at death.

The fear of death, that men live under without Christ—making them slaves—that power is broken in the Christ who died and rose again.

III. HE CAME THAT HE MIGHT BECOME A MERCIFUL AND FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST.

1. He did this by the sacrificing of Himself. Heb. 9:24-28.
2. God has promised to accept the death of His Son for our ransom. Matt. 20:28. We have been bought back from the devil to whom we had sold ourselves. We have been freed. Rom. 6:23.
3. Jesus is always kind, but He never neglects His business (Faithful). I Tim. 1:15.
4. In the old tabernacle, the mercy seat was above the place where the law was stored, signifying that justice is to be ministered with mercy. He has made reconciliation. Heb. 2:17.
5. Living in the flesh, He has known all of our subtle temptations that the world, the flesh and the devil can bring, which tends to make Him merciful. Heb. 7:24-25.

CONCLUSION:

A very fine young woman, wife of a missionary in the interior of Africa, was suddenly struck down by the typhus fever. She had been unconscious for several days. Her friends had tried to "get through" to her, and there were many of those whom she had served, but it was all in vain. Her husband, to whom she had been married for several years, was endeavoring to receive some sign of recognition. In agony and grief, he cried, "Ellen darling, surely you know me. I am Charles, your husband; don't you remember me?" "No," she replied, languidly opening her sightless eyes. "No, I don't know you. My husband? I don't have a husband."

Then someone thought of a different approach and called out, "But you know Jesus, don't you, Ellen? He has been your Saviour, God's revealer of mercies innumerable. He died in your place that you might live forever." This seemed to reach a hidden chord, and in words that seemed to come from the throne of heaven she said, "Jesus, Jesus, yes, I know Jesus. Why He has long been my dearest Friend. Know Jesus? He is my Saviour who offered up Himself on my behalf. He died for me and then came back from the gates of death to tell me that He ever liveth. He is

close to me now, close here, quite close. He loves me and He will stay me. Let me clasp the hand of one who talks to me of my Jesus, my Friend, my Brother."

Surely He has delivered us from the power of death, delivering us even from the fear of death, and He now serves us as our living merciful High Priest who paid the debt of justice.

SEVEN GREAT LESSONS IN HEBREWS, CHAPTER TWO

Hebrews, Chapter 2

INTRODUCTION:

Some chapters lend themselves to sectional studies more readily than others. This chapter is one of those remarkably constructed pieces of Scripture that naturally presents us with successive building stones, respectively laid one upon the other to give us a beautiful series of lessons for Christian development. They represent *wisdom* for the New Testament Christian, far superior to the writings of the Israelitish testament or covenant. Cf. Heb. 2:2.

PROPOSITION: *View with me these seven great lessons of God in Hebrews 2:*

I THE THINGS TO BE PRESENTED TO US ARE WORTHY OF THE MOST CAREFUL ATTENTION AND CONSIDERATION.

Remembering, if we do not heed, then we become His enemies, and God is going to put all His enemies under His feet—Heb. 10:13; just like Joshua did in Josh. 10: 24-25.

II ONE OF THE GREATEST DANGERS FACING CHRISTIANS IS THAT OF PAYING NO ATTENTION, AND THAT IS THE FIRST STEP IN BACKSLIDING FROM HEAVEN'S PROMISES TO HELL'S REALITY.

This is further emphasized in Heb. 10:28-29, 12:25-26.

III THE LORD BECAME THE PERSONAL DELIVERER OF THIS SOUL-SAVING MESSAGE, AND THEN GAVE POWER TO HIS AMBASSADORS TO DEMONSTRATE ITS DIVINE ORIGIN BY MIRACLES, WONDERS AND SIGNS.

1. Miracles of Peter. Acts 5:15-16; Acts 9:34; Acts 9:40.
2. Miracles of Paul. Acts 13:11; 14:10; 16:18; 19:11-12.

IV. GOD LOVES US WITH AN EVERLASTING LOVE, ALTHOUGH HE IS THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE AND HAS DOMINION OVER IT IN ITS ENTIRETY.

1. He loved the great Nicodemus. John 3:1-16.
2. He loved the shepherds, and spoke to them first. Luke 2:8-15.
3. He loved the Samaritan adultress. John 4:9-26.

V. JESUS, THROUGH HIS SUFFERING, MARKED OUT THE WAY FOR OUR ETERNAL SALVATION, AND THEN HE TASTED DEATH FOR EVERY MAN.

1. Jesus suffered from those for whom He was to die. John 7:7.
2. He suffered from false accusations. Luke 19:14 and 47.
3. He suffered physical violence. John 18:23; Matt. 27:25-30.

VI. AS CHRISTIANS WE ARE *ONE* WITH CHRIST, AND BY THIS VERY PROCESS OF SANCTIFICATION WE BECOME LIKE HIM.

1. Jesus prayed for this relationship. John 17:11.
2. Paul commended Christians who were sanctified, unto God. Acts 20:32.
3. Paul prayed for this blessing upon the saints. I Thess. 5:23.

VII. GOD HAD HIS SON TO COME IN THE LIKENESS OF MAN THAT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP US IN THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION.

1. It was prophesied that He would come as a "child." Isa. 9:6 and 7:14.
2. He was to be a *Man*—"Hiding place." Isa. 32:2.
3. The angel told Mary the same thing. Luke 1:30, "*child*."
4. The Scriptures record that Mary did have the Son. Luke 2:7, 11, 40, 52.
5. John summarizes it for us in John 1:14.
6. In heaven, He was seen as the incarnate Christ, by Stephen. Acts 7:56 (after His Death and Resurrection).

CONCLUSION:

How we ought to honor Him as God's Son, and our Saviour forever!

Emperor Theodosius, so history tells us, denied the deity of Christ. When his son, Arcadius, was about sixteen, he decided to make him a partner with himself in the government of the empire. He was making his son co-regent, co-equal, and as much king as himself.

Among the great men who assembled themselves to congratulate the new wearer of the imperial purple, was a Bishop named Amphilocus. He made a marvelous address to the Emperor, rec-

ognized him as the great Theodosius, but said not one thing concerning the crowning of his son. He was about to depart when Theodosius exclaimed, "What do you mean, taking no notice of my son?" Then the Bishop went up to Arcadius and putting his hand upon his head said: "The Lord bless thee, my son!"

By this time the Emperor was roused to anger and furious at the slight paid to his son, exclaimed, "Is that all the respect you pay to 'the prince' that I have made my equal in power and in dignity?"

Amphilocus replied, "Sire, you do so highly resent my apparent neglect of your son, because I do not give him equal honors with yourself, and rightfully so. What do you think the eternal God thinks of you when you degrade his co-equal and co-eternal Son, to the level of one of his creatures, when he has *earned* the place he has been given?"

The Emperor judged the reproof to be a just one, and may I say to the skeptical world today, Jesus Christ, who became the incarnate Son of God, in order to become our atoning sacrifice and our Saviour, is to be honored just as we honor God. I John 5:11-13.

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE GREAT CHRIST

Hebrews 3:1 — *"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, even Jesus."*

INTRODUCTION:

The transition from the former treatise to those which will be forthcoming is seen in this verse. It looks forward as well as backward. Considering Jesus from every angle would be a summary statement of this book of Hebrews; as greater than the Apostles, Prophets, angels, Moses, Joshua, Aaron or Melchizedek.

PROPOSITION: *Christ, His people and their duties described.*

I. CHRIST DESCRIBED.

1. He is the Apostle of this "new and better message" called the Gospel. Hebrews 1:1-2 and 3:6.
2. Back of Him is the same God who "sent" Moses. Exodus 3:10-15.
3. Being sent, qualified Him to be called an "Apostle" of God.
 - a. The primary meaning of the Greek word from which we have our "Apostle" is "one sent forth."

- b. Jesus was sent of God, just as he sent his apostles.
- 4. Being sent of God, he did not claim to be greater than God. John 13:16 and I Cor. 15:27-28.
- 5. He is described as the "High Priest of our confession." 3:1.
 - a. As our High Priest He draws near to God for us.
 - b. He intercedes, reconciles, and propitiates. Heb. 4:14 through 10:18.
 - c. Through Christ, as one sent, God communicates with us; and through Christ, as our High Priest, we communicate with God.

II. CHRIST'S PEOPLE DESCRIBED. "HOLY BRETHREN."

1. This verse looks back to 2:11 and those verses following.
2. Ours is a "Holy calling." Sanctified in Christ. I Cor. 1:2.
3. We are to live unto holiness. I Thess. 4:7.
4. We are admonished that without holiness we shall not see God. Heb. 12:14.
5. We are partakers of a "heavenly calling." Heb. 3:1.
 - a. This is accomplished by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. John 3:3-5.
 - b. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the blessing that flows from God's life within the sanctified. Gal. 5:22.
 - c. We are called from heaven by God's apostle.
 - d. The Holy Spirit makes a veritable heaven within us. John 14:23.
 - e. By this heavenly calling we are conducted to heaven.
6. As "holy brethren" we are open confessors of Christ.
 - a. Christ demands a public confession of Him. Matt. 10:32-33.
 - b. We confess Him with our mouths and by our lives, keeping the sacred communion, regular attendance at the assembly, reflecting His likeness by spreading the truth.

III. CHRISTIAN DUTIES DESCRIBED.

1. Christianity is a life of loving devotion to the Saviour. John 15:9; I Cor. 8:3; I John 2:5; Jude 21.
2. If we love Him, we will serve Him consistently, earnestly, and habitually; He will be the center of our lives.
3. In "Considering Him":
 - a. We come to know Him—I John 5:20.
 - b. We come to love Him—John 8:42.
 - c. We come to serve Him—John 12:26.

When Christ controls our lives these attributes become the natural course of life for us.

d. These functions cause us to be *like Him*—Eph. 4:13.

CONCLUSION:

Knowing the Christ as described in the Bible and accepting his salvation makes us the people of God described in the Bible, and produces within us the activities described in the Bible for the Christian. But remember, it all begins with the Apostle of God, accepted as the Lord of our lives.

To Christ is the Power and the Glory forever.

There are two varieties of magnets, steel and soft iron magnets. The steel magnet receives its magnetism from the loadstone, and has it permanently; it can get along very well alone, in a small way; it can pick up needles and do many small tricks to amuse the little child.

However, there is another kind of magnet which is made of soft iron with coils of copper wire around it. It must be hooked into the great power house electric current. When it is properly hooked to the central power plant, it has a million times the power of the smaller magnet. All that is necessary is to throw the switch and connect up with the power and then the magnet can reach out and lift thousands of pounds of all types of metal.

We are the soft iron; Christ is the Power plant. Our whole power comes from Him who is the source of all power that is good. Faith makes the connection and while we are connected with Christ we can do deeds, live lives, and have hope that no one else on earth can. This wonderful Jesus makes a wonderful people who do mighty works to the glory of God.

Praise His Name forever!

HIGHEST APPEAL TO THE HEBREW MIND (Christ, greater than Moses)

Hebrews 3:2-7

INTRODUCTION:

At the time this epistle was written, Moses, to the Israelite mind, was incomparable. One risked his reputation, even among the professed Christians with a Jewish background, to make any such comparison. Paul has said Christ was a faithful apostle of His Father; also a faithful High Priest of His profession; and now to cap it all off, he compares Him and asserts that He is superior to the great Moses.

Moses was a type of Christ in several respects. He forsook the riches of Egypt for his people: Jesus forsook the glories of heaven that He might redeem us from our sins. Moses voluntarily identified himself with a despised people of an earthly king: Jesus voluntarily identified Himself with the slaves of sin. Moses led his people through the great and terrible wilderness to the borders of the land of Canaan: Jesus proposes to lead His people through this world of sin and selfishness to the land of promise beyond the grave. Moses was distinguished for his meekness: Jesus was, too, submitting to many indignities without retaliation. Moses was a law giver for Israel: Jesus is the law giver of the world for all ages. Moses predicted that the Messiah should be like unto him. Deut. 18:15.

PROPOSITION: *In what ways is Jesus Christ superior to Moses?*

I. HE IS SUPERIOR TO MOSES IN FAITHFULNESS.

1. How important is faithfulness?
 - a. What would friends be, without faithfulness?
 - b. What would the church be, without faithfulness?
 - c. What would homes be, without faithfulness?
 - d. What would our hope be, without the faithfulness of God?
2. Moses was faithful in going before Pharaoh and delivering God's message to him, and he remained faithful until he was buried in the land of Moab. It is no wonder Israel loved him and revered him. (But Moses failed once!)
3. Jesus' faithfulness is seen in many instances.
 - a. He came from heaven to do His Father's will—Heb. 10:9.
 - b. He prayed, "Thy will be done" (Matt. 6:10); and in the most crucial hour of His life, he prayed, "Not my will, but Thine be done."
 - c. He declared that He came in His Father's Name, John 5:43.
 - d. Jesus never failed, not even *once!* He is superior to Moses in His faithfulness, Heb. 5:7-9.

This would make an appeal to the Hebrew mind, because they knew that the one disobedience of Moses kept him out of the promised land, while the obedience of Christ had seen Him safely ascend into heaven.

II. HE IS SUPERIOR TO MOSES IN THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS MISSION.

1. Moses' mission was to free Israel from slavery's bondage, and to deliver them into Canaan.

2. Christ's mission was to free the entire world of its sins, chains of bondage, and to deliver them safely into God's heaven—Titue 1:4.
3. Moses' mission probably included a million or so people, while Christ's mission includes every soul that ever has lived on the earth or ever will inhabit this planet—I Cor. 15:3.
4. Moses gave a life of freedom to these poor slaves that would last until they came to the end of an earthly existence, while Christ came to give *eternal life*, eternal happiness and eternal rejoicing in the presence of God—I Cor. 9:25; Rev. 2:10.

From the importance Jesus placed upon his mission, we can learn that we are not called to please ourselves; we are not called to make money; we are not called to achieve a great name among men; we are not called to do some *great* work, but we are called to be faithful to Christ in the mission he has established here on this earth, preparing people for heaven.

III. HE IS SUPERIOR TO MOSES IN HIS FAITHFULNESS TO SMALL THINGS.

1. Moses dealt with a multitude of people, while Jesus had many of his most important teachings with individuals.
 - a. Nicodemus—John 3:3-16.
 - b. Samaritan woman at the well—John, Chapter 4.
 - c. The woman taken in adultery—John 8:3-11.

What an unpromising prospect that Samaritan woman was, when he asked her for a drink at Jacob's well; yet his kindness to her, opened the gates of Samaria to a hated Jew. Life is not made up of *big* things, but little things. *Little things* have played an important place in the destiny of the world.

Jesus' faithfulness in little things has made him a contemporary of every generation, and a worthy example. He never failed, not even once.

IV. HE IS SUPERIOR TO MOSES IN THAT HE IS LORD AND NOT A SERVANT.

1. Christ was a Son over His own house; Gal. 4:4-7.
2. We are His building; I Peter 2:4-9.
3. The Canaanitish woman was right when she called Him Lord; Matt. 15:22-25; 25:37 and John 20:25.
4. He is going to be the Lord of the Judgment; John 5:22-29.

CONCLUSION:

If He is our Saviour here, we will have had a pleasant life with him, and when we face him at the judgment we know he will pronounce his promised acquittal, "Well done, good and faithful servant: . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

A woman of the Marian persecution illustrates the greatness of Jesus. This woman was brought before the bloody Bonner, then Bishop of London, upon a trial relating to her religion. He threatened her that he would take away her husband from her. To which she replied, "Christ is my husband." "I will take away thy child." She made answer, "Christ is better than ten sons." "I will strip you of every outside comfort of life." To which she answered, "Yea, but Christ is mine, and you cannot strip me of Him." Oh, the assurance that Christ was hers and how it bore her up in the face of death. Moses could not do that.

Basil said, "You may take away my life; you can not take away my comfort; my head, but not my crown; yea, had I a thousand lives, I would lay them all down for my Saviour's sake, who hath done abundantly more for me."

He is superior to Moses.

WARNING REFUSED AND ITS RESULTS

Hebrews 3:7-11

INTRODUCTION:

It is not a question of what will we do tomorrow. No one living or dead has ever seen tomorrow. No one knows for certain there will be a tomorrow. Yesterday is dead, tomorrow is unborn, and all we have in which to labor for either good or bad is *today*. God calls us *today!* The Holy Spirit's voice is to us, *today*. When we hear His voice we are warned not to put it off, hardening our hearts.

PROPOSITION: *God's warning unheeded and its results.*

I. THE CALL IS GIVEN AND THE WARNING ACCOMPANYING IT.

1. God's calls are never trifling.
 - a. He called Adam. Gen. 3:9. It was for man's own good that God called him.
 - b. He called Abraham. Gen. 12:1. He heeded, and the promise of the coming Messiah was given.
 - c. God called Moses. Ex. 3:4. Moses answered, "Here am

I," and willingly he obeyed God's first command.

- d. God called Samuel. I Sam. 3:4-10. Samuel heard, and God made him one of Israel's greatest prophets and judges.
2. Here, not only does God call, but He warns, and His warnings are never trifling either.
 - a. God warned through Noah, and judgment fell because they did not heed. Gen. 6:3 and 7:11.
 - b. God warned Israel in Deut. Chapter 28, and centuries later Daniel recalled that warning as the children of Israel were suffering in Babylonian captivity. Dan. 9:11.
 - c. God warned Israel in Amos' day. Amos 8:8-10. They did not heed, and were carried away into captivity, never to return from Nineveh and Assyria.

God calls here, and there is a reminder of a nation who hardened their hearts in the wilderness.

II. THE WARNING IS "HARDEN NOT YOUR HEARTS, AS IN THE DAY OF PROVOCATION."

1. It was a clear warning because they could readily recall the incident recorded in "The law." Numbers 14:1-12. They provoked God and troubles came:
 - a. The destruction of Korah and his rebellious ones. Num. 16:25-33.
 - b. The plague among the people. Num. 16:41-50.
 - c. Edom refused them passage through. Num. 20:14-21.
 - d. Rebellion and the fiery serpents. Num. 21: 4-9.
 - e. People polluted by the Moabite women. Num. 25:1-9.
"Wherefore I was displeased with that generation, and said, 'They do always err in their hearts.'"

Note this was given to Christians to warn them that even Christians can harden their hearts. This was written to Christians, and they were warned—from those who fell in the wilderness for their foolish, fearful faithlessness. They erred in their *hearts*, and there is where all apostasies begin.

III. THE FINAL RESULT WAS, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER INTO MY REST.

1. This, in its primary sense, had reference to Palestine, the homeland for which the Israelites longed. They died in the wilderness, short of the "Promised Land."

2. We should be more awfully warned, because the destination to which we aspire is of far more value. Rev. Chapters 20 and 21.
3. By the hardening of our hearts we may lose:
 - a. Equality with the angels; children of God being children of the resurrection. Luke 20:36.
 - b. The Father's honor. John 12:26.
 - c. The mansion Jesus has gone to prepare. John 14:2.
 - d. Glory, honor and peace. Rom. 2:10.
 - e. Salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. II Tim. 2:10.
 - f. The crown of righteousness. II Tim. 4:8.
 - g. The new heavens and the new earth .II Pet. 3:13.

CONCLUSION:

These Jewish Christians, rich in God-given history, were warned, and they knew what resulted from not heeding the warnings given to their ancestors. Paul applies this idea of warning and its results to them, and common sense would say to them, **HEED!** because they had so much more to lose.

The father who sees his son tottering toward the brink of a precipice, and, as he sees him, cries out sharply, "Stop, Stop!" Does not that father love his son? The tender mother who sees her infant on the verge of eating some poisonous berry, cries out sharply, "Stop, stop, put it down!" Does not that mother love her child? It is indifference that lets people alone, and allows them to go on, everyone in his own way. It is love, tender love, that warns and raises the cry of alarm frightening the one in danger. The cry of **FIRE! FIRE!** in the middle of the night may startle a man out of his sleep, very rudely, and certainly unpleasantly, but it will save his life if he will heed.

God's cry to Israel and to us of "Repent, and except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish," is God's loving call of warning that can be used to save our souls, if we will listen.

GOD'S PRESCRIPTION, PREVENTING BACKSLIDING, AND APOSTASY

Hebrews 3:12-18

INTRODUCTION:

Here is a lesson for us, which we are commanded to heed. If we do not heed, then unbelief leads us away from the living God.

We, as Christians, are to look after ourselves, and we are to help others along the way. Gal. 6:1-2.

We are commanded to exhort one another day by day. An exhortation is not an argument; it is not an explanation, but it is an appeal that comes red-hot from the heart of one soul to another. Not many Christians obey this command, but altogether too often we exhort our brethren behind their backs by exposing their faults in the presence of others.

We are not called to exhort our brother tomorrow or next week or next year, but today, because there is danger of his being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Oh, the deceitfulness of sin; when it gets into the heart it works in every direction to damn, blight and ruin.

PROPOSITION: *God's prescription preventing Backsliding and Apostasy is—keep busy for the Lord.*

I. KEEP LOVING THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, MIND AND HEART, AND YOU WILL NEVER LOVE THE WORLD.

1. Jesus gave the greatest precautionary measure known to man, in Matt. 22:37-40.
2. It will save us from ever loving the world. I John 2:15-17.
If we love the world, the love of God is not in us.
3. Denying ungodliness, by loving Him, we will abstain from worldly lusts, live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Titue 2:12.
4. Loving the Lord will cause us to abstain from worldly lusts that war against one's soul. I Peter 2:11.

II. KEEP THINKING ABOUT THAT WHICH IS CLEAN AND IT WILL KEEP YOU FROM THINKING ABOUT THAT WHICH IS UNCLEAR.

1. Paul knew the best safeguard that could be afforded to the Saint who is beset on every hand by evil, so he said; Philip-pians 4:8:
 - a. Thinking on the true, keeps out the false.
 - b. Thinking on the honorable things, keeps out the dishon-orable.
 - c. Thinking on the pure, keeps out the impure.
 - d. Thinking on the lovely, keeps out the ugly.
 - e. Thinking on that which is of good report, keeps out that which is of evil report.

- f. Thinking on the virtuous, keeps out the vile.
 - g. Thinking about the Lord Jesus, will keep us from dabbling in the Devil's business.
2. If Christ fills our minds, it will make us to be blameless, and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world. Philippians 2:15.

III. KEEP A PURE AND CLEAN CONVERSATION, USING YOUR TONGUE TO EXHORT YOUR BROTHER; AND WARNING THE IMPENITENT, EXTOLLING THE LORD, IT WILL KEEP YOU FROM FILTHY SPEECH AND UNBECOMING LANGUAGE.

1. Peter sets us a good example in Acts 2:40.
"With many other words he exhorted them."
2. Barnabas, son of exhortation, practiced what his name signifies. Acts 11:22-24.
3. Paul, after suffering severe stoning, kept up the good work and returned to exhort the brethren to continue in the faith. Acts 14:21-22.
4. Paul shows his love and concern in his exhortation. I Thess. 2:11-12; I Tim. 2:1.
5. Paul urged and exhorted Christians to admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak and be longsuffering toward all. I Thess. 5:14-22. All of this was Paul's exhortation.

CONCLUSION:

God's prescription for fruitful holiness of life can be filled any time by his druggist, with a large dose of the Holy Spirit applied in the heart all the time.

A young preacher was working his way through Bible College. He had a wife and two children, and the "preaching point" to which he ministered every week-end paid only \$15.00 a week. He had to live, pay car expenses and clothe his family. Naturally when summer time came he hustled off to get some kind of work to supplement his meager income. He secured a job in the cannery and was working long hours in order to build up a reserve fund for the coming term. All seemed to be going well until one day a preacher came into the cannery and said, "Young man, I want to talk to you when you sit down for lunch." He was an

evangelist and wanted the young preacher to leave his job and come with him to sing, call and help in a revival meeting in an exceptionally hard new field. He exhorted and re-exhorted, and ended up by saying, "Trust God, young man, and come with me and do the work of the Lord. God is not dead. He knows your every need and He is able to supply them."

As a result of that exhortation, the young preacher left his cannery job, took his family and went into the first real revival he had ever been in. There were over one hundred responses during the meeting. A new church was organized. They called the young preacher to come and preach for them and raised his salary to twenty-five dollars a Sunday. He got a real taste of evangelism and, as a result of that exhortation, he became an evangelist himself, winning many souls from coast to coast, to the Lord. Heb. 3:13.

THE HIDDEN ENEMY — UNBELIEF

Hebrews 3:19—"*And we see that they were not able to enter in because of UNBELIEF.*"

INTRODUCTION:

What does the writer mean by "we see?" We see what? That all those who fell, in the preceding verses, had one common enemy that overcame them: UNBELIEF! It has been the hidden enemy of the whole human race in ages past, and we see it on every side in our twentieth century society. Men just do not believe God; they doubt his holy word. They do not believe His Holy Bible, although substantiated by innumerable proofs of its credibility and authenticity. It seems to be a hidden trap that has taken poor foolish and unfortunate mankind in every age. The more wisdom they claim for themselves and boast of attaining in the fields of philosophies and sophistication, the more gullible they become in believing the devil and disbelieving God. PROPOSITION: *The hidden enemy of UNBELIEF and how it works.*

I. JUST AS FAITH LEADS TO OBEDIENCE, UNBELIEF LEADS TO DISOBEDIENCE!

1. Noah believed God and lived righteously (Gen. 6:8 and 6:22), while the Ante-deluvians *disbelieved* and disobeyed. Gen. 6:5; and Matt. 24:28-29.
2. Abraham had faith in God's word and it caused him to separate from the ungodly (Gen. 18-19; 13:18), while Lot

disbelieved God and pitched his tents toward Sodom, wicked companions, and final loss of everything. Gen. 13:10-12 and 19:24-26.

3. Josiah believed God and obeyed Him (II Chron. 35:1-8), while Ahab disbelieved God and sinned. I Kings 16:30-33.
4. Amos believed God and preached his word faithfully to a rebellious people, Amos 4:1-3 and 5:10-13, while Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, disbelieved and became a tool in the hands of the wicked Jeroboam and lied about the prophet. Amos 7:10-13. He had a curse pronounced upon him. Amos 7:16-17.

Belief leads to obedience; disbelieving ends in sin, disobedience and eternal death.

II. FAITH MAKES MEN *UNSELFISH*: *UNBELIEF* CAUSES MEN TO THINK ONLY OF THEMSELVES.

1. Belief in the Lord's Word caused the Corinthians to send a tremendous offering to the suffering saints in Jerusalem. II Cor. 9:6 and 8:3-4. While disbelieving God, causes professed church members to rob God, even as Israel did in Malachi 3: 7-10.
2. Believing God will cause Christian women to stay home and tend to their households, children and husband. I Tim. 5:14 and Titus 2:5. While unbelief causes professed Christian women to make excuses, invade the business field, and desert their children to the shame of the Name of our Lord. cf. I Tim. 5:15.
3. Belief will cause preachers to get out and evangelize to help spread the Gospel and extend the borders of the kingdom. Matt. 28:18-20 and Paul's missionary journeys; I Tim. 2:7; he remembered Romans 10:14, but unbelief causes preachers to have no vision, sit at home and not even call on the church members, be too lazy to even make their own sermons, and excuse themselves by saying, "I just could not stand to be away from my wife for four weeks at a time."

Belief leads to unselfish service: unbelief leads to self-indulgence at the expense of evangelism.

III. BELIEF OPENS THE GATES OF HEAVEN, UNBELIEF OPENS THE GATES OF HELL. II Thess. 1:7-10; Mark 16:15-16.

1. Faith is a necessary prerequisite to entrance into heaven. Acts 20:21; Acts 16:30-34; Acts 8:37; 10:43; 26:18; and Heb. 5:9.
2. Unbelief is all that is required to walk through the gates of hell into damnation. Mark 16:16b; II Thess. 2:10-12; Heb. 3:19 and 12:25; I John 5:10-12; and Rev. 21:8.

CONCLUSION:

We are in the "Valley of decision" today. We can accept the evidences that God has given upon which to build our faith, or we can refuse Him who loved us so much that he gave his only begotten Son to save us. Oh, I beg of you, choose Jesus and believe in him that you might become an obedient, unselfish, heaven-bound child of God.

Those of us who have seen Niagara Falls have no doubt been told of the old trestle bridge that used to carry trains across the chasm. Those train men knew that the old bridge was shaky, so as they started across, they barely crawled along. All the passengers who were brave enough to ride, sat perfectly quiet with their hearts in their mouths, expecting any minute to hear the roar of breaking timbers and tumbling wheels.

Just as the train started across the bridge an old Negro man used to come through distributing tracts, and in a clear voice he would cry out in the stillness, "*If your trust is in the Lord Jesus Christ, you have nothing to fear.*"

Faith brings obedience, and obedience brings Salvation. Mark 16:15-16; Heb. 5:9; John 14:15.

EIGHT GREAT LESSONS IN CHAPTER THREE

INTRODUCTION:

This chapter begins with what might be called the theme of the entire epistle of Hebrews; consider what God has revealed concerning Jesus, for he is greater than any of the Old Testament prophets, greater than any of the angels, greater than Moses or Joshua, as well as surpassing Aaron and all his successors. The exhortation here marks the transition from the first section of this epistle into those that follow. It looks both backward and forward: back to Moses and forward to Heaven.

PROPOSITION: *Eight lessons in this chapter.*

I. JESUS IS CALLED THE APOSTLE AND HIGH PRIEST OF OUR PROFESSION.

1. Apostle; as one sent to lead in this dispensation in much the same manner as Moses had in the old dispensation. v2
2. High Priest; supreme, surpassing all the High Priests known to the old regime. 7:17-28.

II. JESUS WAS SENT DIRECTLY FROM THE FATHER.

John 3:17.

1. John the Baptizer was sent of God, too, but Jesus surpasses him. John 1:6, 26-27 and 49.
2. He who was sent of the Father, has power to send others; commissioning others to do a world-wide work. Matt. 28:18-20.

III. WE ARE THE HOUSEHOLD OVER WHICH CHRIST RULES, IF WE ARE STEADFAST UNTO THE END.

1. I Peter 2:1-6 and Rev. 2:10.
2. Not blown about by every "wind of doctrine." Eph. 2:14.

IV. CHRISTIANS ARE IN DANGER OF HARDENING THEIR HEARTS AGAINST GOD'S CALL; THIS GRIEVES HIM.

1. God was certainly displeased with their predecessors, and He warns them, from their ancestors' experience, to beware! 3:8-9.
2. This displeases God; so He warns them to keep their *hearts*. 3:10.

V. AN EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF LEADS AWAY FROM GOD INTO THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN.

1. The fruits of UNbelief are innumerable, but the one that ranks highest here is hardening of the heart. 3:15.
2. Like sheep, the human heart is tempted to wander from the Good Shepherd. Isa. 53:6.

VI. TODAY IS THE DAY OF DUTY AND SALVATION. PRESENT DUTIES CAN NOT BE SHIFTED WHEN THEY RELATE TO GOD.

1. It was so in Joshua's day. Josh. 25:14,15 "Today."
2. David realized the importance of "today's action." Psalms 95:7.

VII. UNBELIEF CLOSES THE GATES OF HEAVEN TO MAN, JUST AS IT DID TO ISRAEL OF OLD.

1. We can not substitute morality, hospitality or liberality for obedience from a heart of faith. John 15:10 and 14.
 2. Yielded servants, who obey, have salvation. Rom. 6:16.
- We must believe and obey the Word of God or perish.

VIII. THE DIVINE SIDE OF REDEMPTION IS COMPLETED.
ITS PROVISIONS FOR US ARE INEXHAUSTIBLE. ITS
ASSURANCES TO US ARE INFALLIBLE.

1. Our eternal salvation now, depends upon one thing: our faithful continuance in well-doing unto the end. Heb. 10:35 and 38.
2. Our appeal to every man is that you be the kind of person that Paul says he thought these Israelites were! 10:39.

CONCLUSION:

Brethren, we need to remember that we are under greater condemnation than Israel ever could have been. We know better than they did. They did not know the awful consequences they would suffer for their disobedience and unfaithfulness, but we do. Jesus has pictured for us the awful end of those who are UNbelievers. Revelation 21:8; 14:10-12. On the other hand, the Israelites had so little to gain, comparatively speaking, for their faithfulness. It was only a beautiful land, but filled with enemies. We have God's promise that heaven is better than anything man can possibly envision or imagine. We should accept the Lord and be forever *faithful to Him*, because we have so much more to gain than our type, Israel. There, in Heaven, all will be adjusted.

An aged Christian paused to rest himself from a heavy load on a hot summer day. An acquaintance accosted him as a splendid limousine rolled by, in which a haughty man of wealth rode. Everything from the chauffeur to the continental kit said luxury and ease.

"What do you think of Providence, that you speak of so much, when you see yourself as you are and that wealthy, wicked devil that has just gone by?" He went on, "He is fat and well-dressed, and spreads out his fortune to greater and greater lengths, while you, believing that all the silver and gold is the Lord's, serving Him and trusting Him and His Providence, are toiling and sweating in your old age, and you get a mere pittance. How are you going to get any justice out of that?"

The old Saint was quiet for some time, as he looked at the questioner in ill-concealed amazement; then, with great earnestness, he replied, "*Couple Heaven with it, friend; couple Heaven with it, and then?*"

That is our hope and the stay of our lives. Christ, God's apostle, has brought that hope to us in his atonement and invitation to share in his blessings.

OUR REST

Hebrews 4:1-3

INTRODUCTION:

“Therefore” is the key opening word here, just as it has been in chapter two, where he said, “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed,” and in the beginning of the third chapter he exhorts them “Wherefore consider”; and now he says, “Therefore fear.”

The reason given for the Christian fearing, is the awful destiny of those who, in other ages, did not fear, and lost everything. We have a promise of entering into *eternal rest*, but we stand in as much danger of losing it as those who fell in the desert in unbelief that produced unsteadfastness.

PROPOSITION: *Two rests.*

I. THERE WAS A FORMER REST THAT WAS LOST BY ISRAEL.

1. As Israelites, they had a rest day given to them. Ex. 16:23.
 - a. It was dependent upon their being in *Israel*; no other people had this rest, or law. Psa. 147:19,20 and Ex. 31:13-17.
 - b. This law had not been given to any previous people. Deut. 5:1-5.
 - c. The Sabbath day, “Rest Day,” was part of that covenant. Deut. 5:12-15.
 - d. As long as they remained Israelites, the covenant of the Ten Commandments remained in force. They rested on their Sabbath, and others asked them, WHY??
2. The Israelites had a REST that they hoped to attain. Ex. 3:8 and 17; Numb. 14:8.
 - a. This was different in that it depended upon their faithfulness in order to attain it. Deut. 6:18.
 - b. It was promised to Israel, but Israel must keep faithful to their leader, and to God. The vast majority did not keep the law and they died in the wilderness. Only Joshua and Caleb entered the Land of Promise, of all those **who** commenced the journey. Num. 14:23,24.
 - c. Within sight of the Promised Land, because of their unfaithfulness, God cut them off and allowed their bones to bleach on the Arabian desert. Num. 14:29-34.

Israel had a "Day of Rest" given to them and a "Land of Promise"; a double blessedness of REST. One, if they stayed in Israel, they could not lose; the other, they could and did lose!

II. WE HAVE THE *REST* IN THIS DISPENSATION THAT IS TWOFOLD.

1. First we have the rest that is IN Christ. Matt. 11:28-30.
 - a. We have peace in Christ because we know God is on our side. Rom. 8:31 (Peace brings REST).
 - b. We have peace in Christ because we know nothing can separate us from the Love of God. Rom. 8:32-39.
 - c. We have peace because we know Christ can strengthen us to do all things. Phil. 4:13.
 - d. He gives his children peace in all trials. Phil. 4-7.
 - e. While "the heathens rage," have nervous breakdowns, visit their psychiatrist, and "pay through the nose," the Christian rests securely in Christ. John 14:27.

This rest, peace of mind that gives peace to bodies, is in Christ, and every child of God who remains IN Christ enjoys it.

2. Then we have a "Land of Promise" that far surpasses the old land of Palestine. John 14:1-8.
 - a. We are said to be in "The Kingdom of Heaven" even as we travel on to that "better land." Col. 1:13; I Thess. 2:12.
 - b. We have a better land of promise. II Peter 1:10-11.
 - c. This depends on our faithfulness. Gal. 5:16-21; Rev. 2:10; Gal. 5:4; Rev. 2:5.
 - d. "For we who have believed do enter into that rest; even as he hath said, as I swear in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." Hebrew 4:3. God has done his part; our entrance now depends on our faithfully serving him, resting in Christ, to finally be with him in his "Promised Land." Heb. 11:16.

CONCLUSION:

A soldier who had suffered terrible seasickness in crossing the ocean to go into battle on the European shores was finally given orders to return to America. He knew that the same dreary days of awful nausea would be before him. Did he say "No thank you, I will remain in Europe"? No! Why not? Because at the end of that seemingly endless rolling and heaving there would be home, friends and loved ones.

As Christians, we are sailing home; and by and by when we are not thinking of it, some shadowy thing called death, will pass by, and will call us by name, and we will be called home. Surely there are hardships on the turbulent voyage home, but are they worthy of anything but pity, who are not able to bear the hardships of the voyage when they are going home? It will not be long until the journey will be over. Our journey toward the "Promised Land" will be gloriously climaxed by the angelic choir greeting God's pilgrim at the Pearly gates.

Let us come to Christ to find our peace; trust in Christ to keep us and bear our burdens, and steadfastly set our faces toward the goal, never doubting, and some day join the faithful Calebs and Joshuas who have gone on before.

THE UNFOLDING OF GOD'S PERFECT REST

Hebrews 4:4-10

INTRODUCTION:

In this section of Hebrews, the author contemplates the perfect rest beyond the grave. We have here the method God uses often in his revelation, that of unfolding. We see it illustrated in the tabernacle of Divine presence, in the stone temple built by Solomon, and at last in the Spiritual and mystical temple against which the gates of Hades shall not prevail. God knows how much our little mortal minds can assimilate, and he graciously gives us enough to guide us on our way daily, but always with the eternal destiny in his mind for us.

PROPOSITION: *How God unfolds our future perfect rest.*

I. THIS REST IS INTRODUCED BY THE REST WHICH GOD INDULGED IN AFTER FINISHING CREATION. Gen. 2:2.

1. Notice, it was God who rested here, not man.
2. He rested from his work of creation; the finishing of the creation in which man was to make his home for a while. II Peter 3:12,13.
3. The seventh day, on which God rested, would be the first day that man ever saw the sun come up. Man was created on the sixth day of God's creation.
4. This rest of God would be in Heaven, where there is not only no work, but no strife. (Wonderful type of *our* rest.)

II. THE *REST* IS FURTHER ADVANCED BY ALLUDING TO THE FEW WHO TRIUMPHANTLY PASSED OUT OF THE GREAT AND TERRIBLE WILDERNESS, INTO THE "PROMISED LAND" OF CANAAN. cf. Heb. 3:10,11.

1. As we read of the trials, murmurings and rebellions, we are caused to wonder—**WHY?**
 - a. Why the lack of water in Ex. 15:22? God who was able to do such mighty works in Egypt, allowing his people to be threatened with death by thirst. **WHY?**
 - b. Why the lack of a plentiful and varied diet, when he was able to give all the world its food? **WHY?**
 - c. Why the strict and awful laws given to Israel, a people named for the Great "El" God? **WHY?**
 - d. Why were the people asked for gold and silver and fine cloth to build the tabernacle, when God owns all the silver and gold and is the giver of every fine thing we possess? **WHY?**
 - e. Why was the rebellion of leaders and common people allowed? **WHY?**
 - f. Why the punishment for blasphemy? **WHY?**

Now we see from this book of Hebrews, that their trials were simply a type, life's epitome, through which all those on the way to heaven must pass. They become our warning in every trial of life through which we are called to pass. Their rewards, and their judgments should help us to be overcomers to the glory of God. Their triumphs should cause us to seek to be victors and reach our Heaven as some of them reached the land of Canaan.

III. THE *REST* TOWARD WHICH THEY STRIVED WAS AN IMPERFECT REST.

1. Joshua was not a perfect savior. This is illustrated in Achan's sin, and the defeat of Ai.
 - a. He was only a type of the coming PERFECT one.
 - b. As Joshua brought Israel into the new land, safely over Jordan, so Jesus will take us from the land of "Sin" and across the Jordan of death.
2. The "rest" to which Joshua delivered them was not a PERFECT rest, nor a permanent rest. No earthly habitation is a permanent resting place, nor perfect.
 - a. They were surrounded by enemies, subtle and strong, who incessantly pounded on their doors for admittance.

IV. JOSHUA SPOKE OF ANOTHER *REST* AND THAT IS THE ONE TOWARD WHICH WE STRIVE.

1. What sort of a rest is that one to come?
 - a. It will be like the one in which God rested. v. 10.
 - b. It will be the one Jesus has gone to prepare. v. 10; John 14.
 - c. It has been described for us as a city. Rev. 21:9. Beautiful, safe, and completely furnished.
 - d. It will be a place of no sorrow, invasion, or death. Rev. 21:1-5.
 - e. It will be in the presence of God himself. Rev. 4:4-8.

V. LET US GIVE DILIGENCE NOT TO MISS THAT *REST*, OUR PROMISE.

1. No amount of suffering can compare with the reward that we are to receive. Rom. 8:18.
2. We can profit from the failures and the disappointments of Israel as they wandered and murmured against God, and resolve that any price is cheap, when we consider Heaven.
3. We should TRUST in God, "lest we fall after the same example of disobedience."

CONCLUSION:

At the battle of Cressy, where Edward the Black Prince, then a mere youth of eighteen led the vanguard, the king, his father, drew up a strong party on a rising ground, and there beheld the conflict in readiness to send relief when it should be needed. The young Prince being sharply charged, and in some danger, sent to his father for succor; and as the king delayed to send it, another message was sent to crave immediate assistance. To him the king replied, "Go tell my son that I am not so inexperienced a commander as not to know when succor is needed, nor so careless a father as not to send it." He intended that the honor of the day should be his son's and, therefore, let him stand it with courage. He was to receive help only when it would add to his renown.

We are in the battle of life, headed for the land of promise. There are many enemies on every side, but God is overlooking it all and is ready to give us aid that we might be victors for him. I Cor. 10:13.

A SURE WAY TO FIND REST

Hebrews 4:11—*“Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest, that no man fall after the same example of disobedience.”*

INTRODUCTION:

We are commanded to labor that we may enter into that REST. Rest comes before work, only in the dictionary. Many disciples are lustily singing, “O land of rest, for thee I sigh,” when they have not done enough work for the Master to make them tired. I am not prepared to say there will be degrees of reward in heaven, but it is certain that the man who wears himself out in the service of the Lord will find the eternal REST a lot sweeter than lazy persons who have done nothing but loaf. There is no excellence without labor in any field of accomplishment.

PROPOSITION: *How do we enter into that rest?*

I. BY GIVING DILIGENCE.

1. A diligent person gives attention to orders.
 - a. Paul gave some orders to the Corinthians. I Cor. 16:1-2.
 - b. We are warned to give heed to Paul’s words. I Cor. 14:37-38.
 - c. Paul wrote to Christians to behave themselves properly toward wives and husbands. I Cor. 7:1-5.
 - d. Paul wrote exhorting us to do nothing that would cause a weaker brother to stumble. I Cor. 8:1-13.
 - e. Paul admonished us to act with our neighbor’s good in mind. I Cor. 10:31-33; Rom. 12:10.
 - f. John warns us NOT to love the world. I John 2:15-17.
 - g. Titus was told to maintain good works among the Christians. Titus 3:14.

These are the positive commands that are essential to the entrance into that REST promised by the Lord. They are “Orders” essential to the productive Christian life and good name of the Faith. We are to give “Diligence,” “Careful attention,” “persevering application” to these orders in order to enter that rest.

II. WE ENTER THAT REST BY TAKING HEED NOT TO FAIL AS THE ISRAELITES DID THROUGH LACK OF FAITH.

1. It is God’s will that none of us be lost. John 6:39; II Peter 3:9.
2. God has promised to help us if we will depend on him. I Cor. 1:8,9; Phil. 1:6; I Cor. 10:13.

3. We are His disciples, only if we abide in his word. John 8:31.
4. Our faithfulness is not in vain. I Cor. 15:58 and Gal. 6:9.
5. We are blest, even here, in our continuing. James 1:25.
6. God's warning should help us to persevere. Heb. 6:4-6; John 15:6; Rom. 11:22.
7. We are especially warned what to abstain from, in Rev. 22:18-19, lest we lose our reward.

CONCLUSION:

This is the negative side of the "REST" doctrine, and it is just as important that we refrain from certain things as it is for us to do diligently other things. We should give diligence to do what God has asked us to do, and we should be just as diligent to refrain from those items which he has said will cause us to lose our eternal hope.

Hannibal, so history tells us, lost Rome and Italy by resting and wintering his army at Cannae. He had crossed the Alps and won many great victories, and had he pressed on instead of *resting*, he could have taken and destroyed Rome and made himself complete master of all Italy. He rested too far this side of final rest. Let us learn the lesson.

Here on this earth, the Christian life is a battle. We strive for the coronation day, when the battle is over, the voyage is finished, and the victory is won. II Tim. 4:6-8.

Let us give ourselves to the *task* at hand now, and *work*, looking forward to *rest* then.

THE WORD OF THE LIVING GOD

Hebrews 4:12-13

INTRODUCTION:

"The word of God" covers a tremendous territory. It is the "word of God" whether it is written or spoken; spoken to Adam and Eve, or spoken to Israel, or to us. The word of God is a searcher of the thoughts and intents of the heart. We should read it persistently with our hearts, that we may measure the actions of our lives by its demands. We should open our hearts and let God speak to us as we read his word. Our hearts are deeper than the deepest sea, yet there is not one hidden recess in which we can hide one single sin from the piercing eyes of God.

PROPOSITION: *A description of this word, and the secret of its power.*

I. THE WORD OF GOD DESCRIBED.

1. It is living—God breathed. II Tim. 3:15 and II Peter 1:21.
The word of God acts as a living judge who has power to sift motives, judge actions, and pronounce sentences.
 - a. Being alive, it is never a “dead letter,” nor out-of-date.
It is always alive and able to quicken those who come to it for life.
 - b. They are spoken of as oracles in Romans 3:2.
2. It is active. “I have always said, I always will say, that the studious perusal of the sacred volume will make better citizens, better fathers, and better husbands,” said Thomas Jefferson. It has energizing power, power as great as the authority it claims.
 - a. It is a hammer. Jere. 23:29.
 - b. It is like a fire. Jere. 23:29.
 - c. It is sharper than a two-edged sword. Heb. 4:12.
It punishes as a sword, and heals like a surgeon’s knife.
3. It has dissecting power. 4:12. Sharp!
 - a. It pierces deep into the inner recesses of the heart.
 - b. It pricks men in their hearts. Acts 2:37.
 - c. It parts soul and spirit; parts the animal soul from the Spirit made in the likeness of God.
 - d. It separates joints and marrow. It gives guidance and power to the heavenward side of our being. It delineates and distinguishes the fruits of the flesh from the fruit of the Spirit, vividly. Gal. 5:16-24.
4. It is almost omniscient. By the Holy Spirit the writers of “the word” have the most profound knowledge of man’s nature, both carnal and spiritual.
 - a. It becomes the “Touch-stone” of character.
 - b. It looks to behold the true spiritual condition of everyone who turns its pages.
 - c. Secret thoughts and intents of the heart are exposed as its pages are perused.
 - d. It pronounces doom upon the impenitent, while it points the way to mercy in the Lord’s atonement through Christ.

II. THE SECRET OF THE BIBLE'S POWER.

1. It is powerful because it is the product of Omniscience. Job 38; Job 11:7-11.
2. His eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth. II Chron. 16:9; Prov. 15:3; Job 31:4 and 28:24.
3. The word of God is a transcript of the Will of God; no wonder it exercises a transcendent influence, morally, on all men wherever it is read.
4. The author is the all-knowing Judge, "With whom we have to do."
5. The written word from Omniscience is coupled with the supernatural energy of the Holy Spirit to arouse, convict and condemn, as well as to comfort, sanctify and save us.

CONCLUSION:

Every preacher should remember how the word of God is described and the source from which it comes, and then give it out to His praise.

Practically every preacher who has gone through an ordination service remembers "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" and the solemn charge to "preach the word;" be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and teaching." What is he to preach? The Word! What is he to teach? The Word! Why? Because "The Gospel is the power of God unto Salvation, to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first and also the Greek." There is no salvation for lost humanity without the preaching of the Word.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth [The Gospel, a part of THE WORD] and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not [the Gospel, a part of the WORD] shall be damned."

Oh, how important is this God breathed, life giving, soul saving word of God which prepares us to stand uncondemned before the eyes of him with whom we have to do!

ENCOURAGEMENT TO STEADFASTNESS

Hebrews 4:14-16

INTRODUCTION:

We pass from the awful sentence leading us to the grave in the preceding verses, into the presence of the faithful and great High Priest. He was tempted in all points like as we are. Matt.

4:1-11. In reality there are only three points in which we can be tempted: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Our Saviour was tried in every point, and He knows how to sympathize with us in our trials. We are to come to the throne boldly, in full assurance that we will find exactly what we need.

PROPOSITION: *Three encouragements to steadfastness.*

I. WE ARE ENCOURAGED TO BE STEADFAST BECAUSE OF THE SPHERE AND DIGNITY OF OUR LORD'S GLORIOUS MINISTRY, WHICH HE CARRIES ON NOW.

1. He is the *great* high priest. 4:14.
 - a. In contradistinction to the successors of Aaron, who were merely high priests. Ex. Chapter 28.
 - b. He is high priest over men of many nations and in all ages since his inauguration, and will be until the end of earthly time. Vs. Israel for a few years.
 - c. He is greater in his holiness of life; value of the sacrifice that he offered; in the higher influence of his intercession for us.
 - d. He is greater in the place where he ministers, which is heaven, in contrast to the tabernacle and temples down here.
 - e. He is greater in the trials that he overcame to become our *great* high priest, altar and sacrifice, all in one.

II. WE ARE ENCOURAGED TO BE STEADFAST BY THE SYMPATHY WE HAVE FROM OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

1. The Gospels record for us the life of our high priest while he was here, undergoing trials which he overcame to reach his glory.
 - a. He was tried by loneliness, often. He was different! Luke 9:18. Even his disciples, who communed with him daily, failed to *understand* him, or his mission.
 - b. He was tempted by those who should have been his strongest supporters; the Pharisees and Priests. Matt. 26:59.
 - c. His heart was made to yearn for some gratitude from those whom he so faithfully served. (No gratitude) Matt. 8:20.
 - d. The temptation to just step aside from his role *once* was constantly put before him, by Satan himself. Matt. Chapter 4.

- e. He came to the time of supreme sacrifice, unscathed, and passed through the trial of death, without spot or wrinkle.

This qualifies Him to become our sympathetic Great High Priest, who feels our sorrows, and urges us on to steadfastness.

III. WE ARE ENCOURAGED TO STEADFASTNESS BY THE EASY ACCESS TO HIS THRONE OF MERCY AND GRACE.

1. We need his grace in the battles of life, daily. Eph. 2:8-10.
2. It is in contrast with the austere picture that is given in the Old Testament at Sinai. (His Throne.)
3. It is so different from the Old Testament High Priest who entered once a year into the Holy of Holies, untouchable.
4. He is actually before the throne of God, not just the "golden mercy seat" that represented heaven's actualities.
5. He is surrounded by angels, not just figures of the Cherubim.
6. He is in the presence of the Law Giver of all the universe, not in the presence of ten of His laws, in the ark.
7. He is in the Light of Heaven with all its radiance, in contrast to the candlesticks of the Holy Place and a portion of God's glory in the Shekina. (In Him there is no darkness at all.)
8. We come to Him because the Spirit of God in our hearts cries out "Abba Father"; because we have liberty and filial love. (Not merely by Commendment.)

CONCLUSION:

No wonder He is spoken of as the "*Great High Priest.*" We sing, "He will give me grace and glory, and go with me all the way," and how true it is, giving steadfastness to my weary, weak and tempted life daily.

We, as poor tempted mortals, are going to need just what our Great High Priest is able to give: courage to do what we know we ought to do.

During the Civil War, "War of the States," Dr. Harris, a minister of the Gospel, frequently had soldiers quartered in his large house. Some of them indulged much in swearing. The minister noticed this, and on the following Sunday morning preached from these words: "Above all things, my brethren, swear not." This made the cursing soldiers very angry, because they said, as most convicted sinners do, "He just preached that at us." They swore,

and let it be carried to the preacher that if he ever spoke on such a subject again, they would shoot him.

The famous old preacher went to his Great High Priest, and from Him who has been tempted in all points as we are, even facing the death sentence, he received strength to be steadfast, and on the next Lord's Day he preached from the very same text and made the application of it even stronger. As he was preaching, a hot-headed soldier reached for his rifle and, raising it to his shoulder, aimed it directly at Doctor Harris' face—but he went on to the conclusion of the sermon without the slightest hesitation. Let us "Go, and do likewise."

WE TOO, ARE HELPED

Hebrews 4

INTRODUCTION:

The Bible is such a wonderful book; it blesses us as we read it and practice it in small amounts as preachers use it in "Textual Sermons," and it helps us when we go to it and imbibe its teaching by the whole chapter. The older I become, the more I enjoy "Chapter Preaching" and exposition of the Book in large portions. Chapter four become a mine more precious than Kimberly, South Africa's diamond field, because it prepares us for the final exit from this old world of trials, into the presence of the King of the immortals.

PROPOSITION: *Four great "Whens."*

I. WHEN WE VIEW THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN IN THE PAST BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF, WE ARE WARNED.

1. David, when he was tempted, if he had believed like Joseph, would never have stained his good name with adultery, deception, disloyalty and murder. II Sam. 11; Vs. Gen. 39: 7-9. We are warned.
2. If Rehoboam had believed God, instead of the young fools he had chosen, his name might have shone in God's hall of fame along with David's and Solomon's. I Kings 12:6,7 vs. I Kings 12:8-11. We are warned. (Remember Rehoboam's father was the wisest man in the world.)
3. If Ahab had believed God's prophet (I Kings 22:17-23) instead of the ungodly false prophets (I Kings 22:11,12), he might have saved his life and become a blessing to his people instead of a curse.

II. WHEN WE SEE THOSE WHO HAVE GAINED THE VICTORY THROUGH *FAITH*, IT ENCOURAGES US.

1. When we see the faith of Abraham waiting for nearly one hundred years for an heir, we are encouraged. Gen. 21:1-7.
2. When we see the faith of Moses as he pleads with Reuel to come with them (Numbers 10:29-32), it gives us courage. He had so little besides his faith; we have so many of the fulfilled promises of God on which to base our hopes.
3. When we see the faith of Israel (Gen. 48:21) and the faith of Joseph (50:24), and see it fulfilled (Ex. 13:19), we are encouraged.
4. When we see the faith against odds, of Joshua and Caleb in Numbers 14:6-10, and see that faith finally rewarded in Joshua as the new leader in Israel and Caleb inheriting in the promised land, we are encouraged.

III. WHEN WE ARE WEARY AND REMEMBER THAT *REST* WAS SWEET TO THOSE WHO LABORED, WE ARE CAUSED TO PRESS ON.

1. Moses, weary from herding sheep for forty years, was much more weary in herding "Goats" of Israel for forty more years, surely speaks to us from Nebo as he viewed the beautiful land of promise, of one going to his *rest*, deservedly. Deut. 34:1-6.
2. As David, the tireless leader of a people he had reunited, came to the end of a forty-year reign, to "sleep with his fathers," he reminds us that *rest* is enjoyed by those who have labored. I Kings 2:10.
3. As Jeremiah suffers through life, rejection of his own people, cast out by his own king, dungeoned by false prophets, nearly drowned in the pit, kept in prison in the king's yard, captured by rebels and dragged off to Egypt to die, he reminds us that to those who labor, *rest* is a blessing.

IV. WHEN WE ARE TEMPTED AND TRIED, AND WE REMEMBER THOSE WHO WERE DOOMED TO DEATH FACING PAIN AND SORROW, BUT WHO TURNED TO GOD AND FOUND STRENGTH FOR THEIR NEEDS, WE ARE ADMONISHED TO FOLLOW IN THEIR STEPS.

1. Jesus, as he hung on the cruel and ignominious cross, called on God and willingly gave up the ghost, harboring no ill will toward his murderers. Matt. 27:50 and Luke 23:24. We see the source of his strength and victory.

2. Stephen, surrounded by blood-thirsty religious fanatics and a mob stirred up to a frenzy, as stones were being hurled at him, sees Jesus standing at the right hand of God and prays much the same prayer in his final victory, as did his Lord; we are urged to turn to that same source in our trials.
3. Paul, confined to the Roman prison, knowing that the end of his busy, trusting, and victorious life was near, could say, II Tim. 4:6-8. He not only looked for the crown, but urges *us* to press on, inspired by the same spirit because we, too, have a crown promised to us as we live by faith, endure trials, and look forward to that *rest*.

CONCLUSION:

What possible higher appeal could be made to you who have not found Christ as your personal Saviour than these two giants of victory, Stephen and Paul? In them we see the promises given by the Lord, "I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world," practically fulfilled, gloriously completed, as they entered their *Rest!*

MINISTERIAL MUSTS

Hebrews 5:1-2—*"For every high priest, being taken from among men, is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can bear gently with the ignorant and erring, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity";*

INTRODUCTION:

The Hebrews to whom Paul directs this epistle were well acquainted with the office of a high priest, the law of Moses, and the Levitical priesthood, hence it was easy for them to see that the priesthood of Jesus Christ had a similar, yet higher, object.

The true minister today must have some of the qualifications that God demanded of the Aaronic priesthood in the Old Testament. Not that he has any more ready access to the presence of God than the lowest sinner in Christ, but in his field of *ministering* to others, he must be like the Levitical priesthood.

PROPOSITION: *What are some of these "Musts" demanded?*

- I. THE GOOD MINISTER MUST REMEMBER THAT SINNERS ARE DIFFERENT IN THE DEGREE OF THEIR GUILT.

1. There is a difference in the actual sin. There is the sin committed presumptuously, as well as the sin in ignorance. Num. 15:27-31.
 - a. Sins of rebellion are far different from sins of error: the difference between murder and involuntary homicide.
2. The sin mentioned in Heb. 5:2 is that of the ignorant and erring.
 - a. Possibility of moral infirmity.
 - b. Those who have wandered away from the path of rectitude. These sinners are by no means guiltless, but they are not as guilty nor will they be judged as severely as the willfully deliberate sinner. Luke 12:47-48.
3. There are conditions and circumstances that must be considered in dealing with sin.
 - a. The heathen Hottentot in Africa cannot be judged by the same standard that an enlightened church member would be, in America.
 - b. The amount of temptation; the moral atmosphere in which the sinner has lived; the tendency to certain sins; the attitude of those among whom he lives, must be considered.

The very same crime may be committed by two persons and their guilt may be very much different. One may have had no instructions, no parental teaching or example, no admonition from any minister, no warning and no encouragement, while the other may have had all of these, and then sinned deliberately.

The successful minister must consider, in dealing with men, the background of those with whom he has to deal.

II. THE SUCCESSFUL MINISTER MUST REMEMBER HOW WEAK HE IS, HIMSELF, AND LEARN TO DEAL WITH THE IGNORANT AND ERRING, GENTLY.

1. The minister's own moral ignorance and errors should teach him to understand the ignorance and erring of others.
 - a. He knows from self-inspection, how easily the soul is led into error. Rom. 7:14-24.
 - b. He has had to contend against the devil's temptations and his own fleshly inclinations. Gal. 5:19-20.
 - c. He can remember his own sorrowful repentance and his path of return to the fold of the righteous.

- 2.. Patience and gentleness should come into his dealing with the ignorant and erring, because of his own moral weaknesses.
 - a. The minister has received, both from his God and from offended brethren, forbearance and forgiveness.
 - b. The minister must remember that more than likely he will stand in need of help again, before death calls him.
 - c. The good minister, then, should be tolerant and gentle with the ignorant and erring.

CONCLUSION:

The good minister should learn from this passage, how to be a better servant of his fellowmen. He should instruct parents, leaders of young people, young preachers and teachers, to remember, if they are going to ever help the ignorant and erring, they must be forbearing and gentle with them.

For this class of sinners, sternness and severity often repel, yes, aggravate the wanderer, and cause him to go yet further into sin.

Lord Collingwood said, "I cannot forbear pointing out to you, my dearest child, the great advantage that will result from a temperate conduct and sweetness of manner to all people on all occasions. Never forget that you are a gentlewoman, and all your words and actions should make you gentle. I never heard your mother—your dear mother—say a harsh or hasty thing to any person in my life. Endeavor to imitate her. I am quick and hasty in my temper; but, my darling, it is a misfortune which, not having been sufficiently restrained in my youth, has caused me inexpressible pain. It has given me more trouble to subdue this impetuosity than anything I have ever undertaken."

Many a good minister could say the same to every other person and about himself, too. Let us "bear gently with the ignorant and the erring"; more so than God expected of the Aaronic Priesthood.

PAUL'S HIGH PRIEST APPEAL

Hebrews 5:1-10

INTRODUCTION:

To the Jewish mind, this reasoning was very understandable. They knew that God had made a way of contacting Him, when the sinner was guilty and defiled, and that was through the sacrifice offered and the plea made by the High Priest of the Old

Testament. It was easy for them to accept the Holy Christ who did not need a sacrifice for His sins to become their intervening Priest.

Notice Paul did not refer to himself as a priest, though he was a preacher superior to any living man today; he pointed them to the *High Priest* of God's new covenant.

PROPOSITION: *Christ our High Priest in reality.*

I. WHAT THE HIGH PRIEST WAS.

1. He held an honorable office in Israel. Heb. 5:4, "Honor."
2. The importance of his functions.
 - a. He acts for others in a relation that is superior to anything else on earth: their relationship to their God. God has appointed this means of Grace to the sinner who will seek it.
 - b. By the Grace of God, we are allowed through sacrifices offered up by the priest, to communicate with God.
3. He had certain qualifications that must be met.
 - a. He was a man. Heb. 5:1.
 - b. He must be gentle with the ignorant and erring. 5:2.
This was a God-demanded qualification that has been so sadly lacking in the vast majority of "Priests."
 - c. The very name "Priest" has an evil connotation because of the conduct of priests in general. The Reformation period gives us a picture of priests who were arrogant, cruel, and simply tools of the hierarchy; enemies of the Scriptures and anyone who dared to openly try to follow them!
4. The priest must have an offering to sacrifice.
 - a. "He may offer both gifts and sacrifices." Heb. 5:1.
 - b. The sin offering made the priestly mediation effective. It was demanded of God.
 - c. Without the sin offering, the priest and sinner were cut off from God.
5. The priest must be appointed by God. V. 4.
 - a. God is the offended party, so it is up to Him to state the grounds on which He may be approached, as well as *who* would be permitted to make the sacrifice.

All of these facts the Jewish Christians were acquainted with, so they readily understood the approach Paul was making to them.

II. THE QUALITIES CHRIST POSSESSED TO BECOME OUR HIGH PRIEST.

1. The High Priest's qualifications are met in Christ.
 - a. God appointed Him. Heb. 5:5-6, based on Psa. 110:4.
 - b. He is a man. John 1:4; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 5:7-8.
 - c. He had learned obedience, and thereby became perfect. Heb. 5:8-9.
 - d. His sufferings have made Him able to sympathize with us. Heb. 4:7-8. Life among sinners; on Calvary for us.
 - e. He had a sacrifice to offer; i.e., Himself. Heb. 9:12-14 and 10:10.
 - f. By His sacrifice He made complete reconciliation for sin.
 - g. He is fulfilling the duties of a High Priest, as of now. Heb. 9:11 and 24-26.

III. HE SURPASSES ALL OTHER HIGH PRIESTS OF ISRAEL.

1. He was PERFECT. Heb. 7:26-28.
2. He has expiated sin. Heb. 9:12.
3. He is High Priest for all men in every nation and in every age. Heb. 8:1-2ff.
4. He is making intercession for all of His people, always. Heb. 9:28.

CONCLUSION:

The scene of this incident was in a large city restaurant. The men at one of the tables were conversing on the subject of religion and the argument grew so lively that it was impossible for those at the nearest tables not to hear. The argument was about whether salvation was by works or by grace.

A Roman Catholic in the party insisted that no man can know he is saved until he dies, and as a final argument he exclaimed, "Well, all I can say is this, I have placed myself in the hands of my priest, and he is responsible for my salvation."

At this point a gentleman arose from his table, and lifting his hat said: "Gentlemen, I believe I am well-known in the law courts and in this room, at least enough to speak. I could not help but hear the argument, and I feel bound to say that our Roman Catholic friend is quite logical in what he says. I also have placed myself in the hands of my *Priest*, and He is responsible for my salvation. The mistake our friend has made is that he has chosen the *wrong priest*. My *Priest* is the Lord Jesus Christ; He is my *High Priest*."

He is not only our High Priest, he is the *Bishop* of our souls.

IRREVERENCE

Hebrews 5:7—“*And was heard, in that he feared.*”

(The Greek text says: “Was heard from His reverence.”)

INTRODUCTION:

We can learn from Jesus and follow in his footsteps, fearing God and showing him reverence, and, on the other hand, we can learn as we look about us and see the standards of Jesus completely flouted. Irreverence is not fearing, not revering, not being awed into silence, not bending the knee, not bowing the soul before him in whom we live and move and have our being.

PROPOSITION: *Irreverence, and how to meet it.*

I. IRREVERENCE IS EVERYWHERE TODAY.

1. We see it in churches which make the world their chief center of activities. The Roman Catholic Church has named one of its biggest bazaars the “Holy Spirit Festival,” where they dance, drink, gamble and fight.
2. We see irreverence among the scoffers on the outside, from Modernists in the Pulpit to Atheists on the street corners.
3. We see irreverence among the so-called educated who mock at the promise of the Lord to return for his own, and they say, “Where is the promise of His coming?” just like they did in Amos’ day.
4. We see irreverence right in the assembly, with loud talk and thoughtless chatter from children to great-grandparents.
5. We see irreverence in magazines and on the printed page of the dailies, with every form of curse word being distributed.
6. We see irreverence in the White House when the press admits that the President curses like a sailor.
7. Worst of all, we see irreverence, if we look, right in the secret chambers of our imagination, as we sometimes doubt the goodness of God’s Providence.

II. WHERE DOES THIS IRREVERENCE COME FROM?

1. Certain things promote and assist, if not create, irreverence:
 - a. Thoughtless levity; about ninety percent of the TV programs, if not openly irreverent, are leading to the fringes of it.
 - b. In Jesus’ day (Matt. 22:5), “They made light of it and went their way.” They still treat Christianity that way

for the most part. Every lodge ritual makes light of true Christianity.

- c. There is nothing too sacred for some fool to make a joke out of it.
- d. Vanity creates irreverence. A humble man only can be devout. The first condition of reverence is humility.
- e. Vain, proud men are not praying men. They have nothing to do with Him who "was heard because he feared."
- f. Excitement creates irreverence. Theater, radio and TV live on whoop, whoop, whoop it up. No time to think about important or eternal verities; "Let's rumble, twist, hotcha, and grind, to keep our minds off of God!"

III. HOW TO MEET IRREVERENCE.

1. This is a battle of many details. By paying attention to details, is the only way we can win.
2. If we would win we must:
 - a. Be reverent in worshipping God. (Cut out foolishness.)
 - b. Be reverent in speech. (Stop loose talk.)
 - c. Be reverent in thought. (That is the source of talk and actions unbecoming a Christian.)
 - d. Be reverent in *meditation*. This is almost a lost art in this day of everything being in a dither; high pitched and steamed up all the time, with nervous breakdowns—and psycho-analysts' couches being worn to a frazzle. Psa. 19:14.

CONCLUSION:

Most assuredly, the angels of Heaven and all the living creatures give glory and reverence to the Lamb of God; how much more should we! (Rev. 5:8-10.) "And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth."

"The soul of the Christian religion is reverence."

Many years ago the grand old man of England, Gladstone, was cutting down a tree; the relic hunters were standing thickly

around waiting for a chance to get the chips as relics. One of them succeeded in getting a large chip, and was so delighted that he said to the crowd, "Hey lads, when I die, this shall go in my coffin."

This was too much for the sensible wife of Gladstone. She could not let that get by without a comment, so she said at once, "Sam, my lad, if you would worship God as you worship the great Gladstone, you would stand a better chance of going where the chips would not burn."

Many times people have more respect for a dead president, or for the flag of America than they do for the great God of Heaven, but if we would be like Jesus, let us be heard for our *reverence!*

A NEW LOOK AT GETHSEMANE

Hebrews 5:7-10

INTRODUCTION:

Here is a description of what went on in Gethsemane, without all of the outside descriptions. Here, there is no olive tree, no brook Kedron, no sleeping disciples, and no gentle rebuke. The treacherous traitor, Judas, is lacking, but the battle that went on in the heart of Jesus himself is referred to.

PROPOSITION. *Suffering, and how Jesus met it.*

I. THE COMPONENTS OF HIS SUFFERING.

1. This suffering took place while Jesus was in the flesh; capable of suffering even more than we are, because of his sinless sensitiveness.
 - a. Being in the flesh, having seen others die on the cross, it is no wonder that he shrunk from the death that awaited him. (Awfulness of that death by crucifixion.)
 - b. He was not only in the flesh, but he was one who would know the accompanying suffering of dying for all the sins of all the world. I Cor. 15:3.
2. Being in the flesh, he possessed a nature that was susceptible to all the temptations to sin. Heb. 4:15.
 - a. We can readily see why he would shrink from death, because death is the penalty for sin, and he had not been guilty of *any* sin. Heb. 7:27; II Cor. 5:21.
 - b. Truly this was to be a *vicarious* death; death for others. Heb. 9:15; I Jn. 1:7-10; Eph. 1:7.
3. From a human standpoint, why should not Jesus enjoy the privilege of being taken from this world as Enoch or Elijah?

II. THE STRENGTH OF THE SUFFERING.

1. This is duly inferred by the urgency of the supplication.
 - a. This is a prayer out of personal agony; it was an agony with an overpowering effect on every intent of his heart.
 - b. This is the Lord's supreme temptation.

He had raised others from the dead, and now he does not desire to face death unless it is clearly the will of God.

 - (1) We look upon death as a constant possibility; with no resources for warding it off, but it was not so with Jesus.
 - c. Hence the question, "Can it be right that I should die?"

He had helped others, comforted others, consoled others.
 - d. Now, is it God's will that I give myself into the hands of these butchers; fall finally into the hands of Pilate; yield everything except Spiritual integrity?
 - e. With this struggle of the heart going on, is it any wonder he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood!

III. HOW DID HE COME OUT VICTORIOUS IN THIS SUFFERING?

1. He went into the garden of Gethsemane with one great practical guide for his life; he would do whatever the will of the Father was, for him, willingly.
 - a. We all need an anchor of the soul, and this was His.
 - b. He had been willing to let the will of God lead him, into plots, and treacheries; into the very innermost circle of the wickedest.
 - c. All of these were leading nearer, with the passing of time, to the crucifixion on Calvary.
 - d. Recognizing that he was doing the will of the Father had kept Christ solidly grounded in all his temptations.
2. Now, his death was to do more for mankind than all his life had been able to accomplish.
3. The death of Jesus far surpasses Enoch's translation. Rom. 5:6-11.

IV. GREAT RESULTS ACCOMPLISHED BY HIS SUFFERING.

1. We now measure our obedience by His obedience. He set the example: following His teaching. Matt. 10:39.
2. We, by his example, in every trial of life, ask, "What is the will of my Father?"
3. We can trust *Him*, that all things will work together for our good, if we love Him; follow Him!

4. By the will of God, He went to the Cross. Now we can see that it was the wise forethought of God to purchase our redemption. Then, it was difficult to see.
5. Through this, He became the author of eternal salvation, far superior to a temporal salvation, purchased by bulls and goats.
6. Through His death came the resurrection; the ascension; passing through the veil, and entrance into the place of the functioning High Priest, forever.
7. We all face death. It may for a while obscure our destiny, but through Christ, who conquered death, we become Conquerors and Priests with Him forever, through His suffering. God washes our eyes with tears until we can see the invisible.

CONCLUSION:

History tells us that while in Egypt with a very few soldiers, Agesilaus had to meet a host of some two hundred thousand men. He wrote the word *victory* in the palm of his left hand. When the priest cut up a bird for an augury, Agesilaus pressed the liver against the indelible word in his hand and then showed the wonder of it to his men, telling them that the gods had given them this certain omen of victory. They believed him, went into battle, and won. Thank God, we do not have a deceptive General or Captain. Christ by his death, has purchased our salvation, and we can depend upon him who never sinned, never told one falsehood. He suffered for us and now stands at the right hand of God, calling all to come to him, the *Victor!*

SPIRITUAL DULLNESS

Hebrews 5:11-14

INTRODUCTION:

Here Paul introduces the greatest portion of his theme: the pre-eminence of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, he has hardly begun his new era of thought until he notices his inability to get across his truth to his hearers, because of their dullness in spiritual perception. He immediately tries to remedy their condition by showing the close relationship between ignorance deliberately indulged in, and apostasy. The whole tone of this parenthetical statement is, the danger of their becoming apostates because of their hidden immature apprehension and their lack of desire to grow up in Spiritual truths.

PROPOSITION: *Spiritual dullness and its results.*

I. SPIRITUAL DULLNESS MAY BE GREAT, EVEN WITH THE FINEST OF TEACHERS.

1. It was this condition here that aroused Paul to make these corrective remarks. They had great teachers in those days. Eph. 4:11-15.
 - a. They should have been able to teach others by this time.
 - b. They were ignorant of the most rudimentary and elementary doctrines of the Faith. Heb. 5:2.
 - c. They needed to be instructed in what every Christian ought to have learned in the very beginning. Acts 2:36-41.
 - d. They were babies when they should have been mature-minded *men* in the Gospel truths. Heb. 5:2.
 - e. If Paul thought *they* were ignorant, I wonder what he would think if he interviewed the average congregation today?
 - f. Today, how many church members are satisfied to know only the very elementary truths about the Faith? (Babes.)

One cannot help but wonder, if the Bible is not much more widely circulated than it is read or studied or understood!

II. SPIRITUAL DULLNESS IS 99% JUST PLAIN SINFUL.

1. One could be dull from lack of mentality, or from lack of opportunity to gain knowledge (1%). We feel sorry for those.
2. This was not the case in Paul's day (Heb. 5:12). "Ought" means they were able, and had opportunity, too. It is not our dilemma, either.
3. We have had 1900 years of Christian influence and opportunities, more than they had. Bibles are everywhere now, even furnished by the church.
 - a. "By reason of time," we have had it!
 - b. We should be teachers of others, even as Paul accuses these early slow-growing, slow-hearing Hebrews.
4. Their proportionate opportunity for growth should have shown proportionate growth and Christian progress! "By reason of time."
5. This dullness in the face of so many opportunities was *wrong*, and Paul rightly rebukes them for their condition.

- a. Such dullness was just plain sin.
 - b. Opportunities for growth had been neglected.
 - c. Responsibilities had not been acknowledged nor fulfilled.
6. Purity of heart and Christian growth are inseparably connected.
- a. Corruption in the heart clogs the stream of spiritual apprehension. John 7:17.
 - b. The true heart hungers and thirsts after *righteousness*, and is quick to apprehend spiritual truths. Matt. 5:8.
 - c. Worldliness dims the perceptive powers of the soul. I John 2:15-17.
 - d. Ethereal and perennial beauties of heaven are blacked out completely by the material things that soon perish.

Usually the lack of growth in the Christian's life is directly caused by his lack of attention to heavenly things and his fixed attention upon worldly pleasures. They are enemies. Jas. 4:4.

III. SPIRITUAL DULLNESS BEARS THE FRUIT OF ETERNAL LOSS.

1. The world loses opportunity to learn of our Saviour. They should be teaching others, but they cannot.
 - a. Children are not taught by their parents.
 - b. Neighbors are not taught by the one who "Ought" to be able to teach.
2. Then there is the awful loss to the person so afflicted.
 - a. He loses the fuller and higher meaning of spiritual truth taught; goes home from church with an empty bag that could be filled to overflowing if he would open his ears.
 - b. He causes the minister's work to be ineffectual; thereby hurting him and others!
3. The food that should be eaten by full-grown men, becomes too heavy for them to assimilate. They go through life living on "Clapp's" baby food, or goat milk.
4. They spend their entire lives in "Infancy." What a shame to the Christ who purchased them, and the God who loves them.

CONCLUSION:

One of the most lovable and sweetest sights on the earth is a baby about three or four months old. He is just old enough to master the art of running a "pacifier." He smiles, looks halfway cross-eyed at his new acquisition and slobbers all over his bib and

tucker. We all look down at the growing baby and smile with approval, and wish the new parents much happiness with their growing baby. But one of the most revolting sights we have to face in life is an idiot who has lived possibly 15 to 30 years, and all he can do is slobber over himself, try to find his hands, and stare off into emptiness. We do not smile into the face of such unfortunate parents for fear they will think we are ridiculing them, nor do we expect them to be happy with such an unfortunate "thing" to put up with in their homes.

How the heart of God must ache when he looks down upon those who "by reason of time ought to be teachers of others," but are *Babes* by choice.

THE DEVIL NEVER SLEEPS

Hebrews 6:1-2

INTRODUCTION:

The Devil never sleeps, and one of his most effective methods of attacking the Christian and completely destroying him, is to get the newborn or old soldier to sleep on the job, and cease to grow unto perfection. A Christian who is not growing, is the most fertile soil known to man in which the Devil plants his seed. The ground is already ploughed and waiting.

PROPOSITION:

Getting to the goal beyond the six first principles.

I. THESE SIX PRINCIPLES, THAT ARE CALLED "FIRST PRINCIPLES," CAN BE OUTLINED UNDER THREE HEADINGS, WITH TWO POINTS UNDER EACH.

A. Two initial experiences of the beginning Christian life.

1. *First* dealt with is "Repentance from dead works." Certainly these would include repentance from all known sin, under the old law or under the new. Rom. 12:2

a. They brought spiritual death, and will end in eternal death. There is no "Work" of any law that can save, and in coming to Christ, all the "Dead works" must be left out. Eph. 2:8-9.

b. Repentance from these works means we have left them, because they contain nothing that will give us grounds of acceptance before God. II Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5; Rom. 3:20.

2. *The second* one mentioned is "Faith toward God."
 - a. This faith, certainly is primary in anyone's salvation. Rom. 4:5.
 - b. It is a faith in God, that is revealed in Christ. Rom. 3:21-26.
 - c. It is a vital faith that departs from any man-made plan of salvation, either by philosophy or good works, and depends upon the Word of God for its inheritance entirely. Rom. 10:17.
- B. Two Christian symbolic customs.
1. *First*, the "teaching of baptism or washing."
 - a. Every Christian, in order to become a Christian, must have been born again, born of water and the Spirit; "Baptized into Christ." That was where he became a Christian. It is a first principle, truly. A *needed first principle*, but nevertheless, a first principle, a beginning point. Jn. 3:3-5; Gal. 3:27.
 2. *The second* symbol mentioned is "The teaching of the laying on of hands."
 - a. During the early days of Christianity there was the laying on of hands, for the imparting of the Holy Spirit gifts. These were given to certain members of the church to guide the church until the final revealed Word should be given. It was certainly a first principle. Acts 8:15-17.
 - b. Now, or when Christians grow up, they depend on the revealed Word, and study to show themselves approved unto God. II Tim. 2:15 and 3:16-17.
- C. Two Christian doctrines of future events; first principles.
1. *First*, "The teaching of the Resurrection of the Dead."
 - a. No one had taught, or since He lived has taught the Resurrection of the Dead, as clearly as did Jesus. John 5:25-29.
 - b. These Christians had heard the apostles reaffirm this central doctrine so unique to Christianity. I Cor. 15:13-14; I Thess. 4:16.
 - c. Christ's Resurrection confirmed the doctrine. I Cor. 15:6; Luke 24:35,39,43.
 2. *Second*, "The teaching of eternal judgment."
 - a. Daniel had taught these Jews' forefathers this fundamental truth. Dan. 12:2.

- b. Certainly Paul laid this down as a first principle to the Athenians. Acts 17:30-31.
- c. It is a day when each shall give an account. Rom. 14:12.
- d. Jesus taught it in Matthew 25:31-46.

These three points, with their two attached points, belong to the beginning of the Christian life; they are *first principles*. They are to be left behind us, not discarded, but, like a house is built upon a foundation, it rises to completion. When the house is completed, we do not go round digging a hole to look at the foundation ever so often.

II. THERE IS A GOAL THAT IS TO BE ATTAINED BY THE "GROWN CHRISTIAN."

1. We are to "go on unto perfection"; full-growth, maturity.
 - a. There must be a growing up in knowledge. II Tim. 2:15 and 3:16-17.
Advancing beyond the elementary stages, unto the higher and deeper truths for full-grown men! Eph. 4:13.
 - b. There must be a maturity in Christian experience. I Cor. 16:13. Spiritual convictions grow out of mental perceptions. There is a fullness of blessings in Christ. Eph. 3:16-19.
 - c. There must be a growing up in conduct becoming a Christian. This is merely expressing what we believe and have experienced inwardly. Rom. 12:17-21.
The full-grown Christian seeks to manifest by word and act an ever-increasing conformity to the will of God as expressed in "The Word of God." Rom. 12:2.

CONCLUSION:

Let us be like Paul in Philippians 3:12-16.

We have the old "Hebrew type of Christians" to this day. They are cold. They make no progress. They never seem to get going. Years roll on and they are just about the same—the same besetting sins, the same infirmities of disposition, same seat in church, same weaknesses in trials, the same luke-warmness of heart, the same apathy, the same dim resemblance to Christ—but no new knowledge, no increased interest in the Kingdom of God, no freshness, no new strength, no new fruits to show they are alive. Growth is the proof of life; even a snail and a sloth move. May God help us to grow up in Christ-likeness.

THE FALLING AWAY, FROM WHICH THERE IS NO RETURN

Hebrews 6:4-8

INTRODUCTION:

This text carries a frightful indictment against Calvinism's "once in Grace, always in Grace," falsehood. Not only is it possible to backslide and be out of fellowship with God, but it is possible, according to this text, to become so far removed from God as to make it impossible to ever be renewed again; to become absolute apostates.

PROPOSITION: *Three tenses in this fall into apostasy.*

I. THE GREATNESS OF THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE IN SALVATION FROM SIN. 6:4-5.

Paul gives these blessed experiences cumulatively.

1. The experience of Spiritual enlightenment. 6:4.
 - a. In the place of darkness and ignorance there has come in light, illumination, and divine knowledge. 10:32.
 - b. When sinners are converted, they turn from darkness to light. They see their undone condition, need of salvation, and that need completely met in Christ's atoning death. Eph. 1:17-18.
2. The experience of the blessings delivered through the Gospel. They have "tasted of the heavenly gift." 6:4.
This "taste" is the equivalent of Heb. 2:9. It is an experience. cf. also I Peter 2:3.
This "heavenly gift" brought to us by Christ, causes the Christian to experience sins forgiven, God's peace, and the Holy Spirit to impart power to live as overcomers. Acts 8:39.
3. The experience of the superiority of the Divine Revelation. "tasted the good word of God." 6:5.
 - a. He knows the comforting power, its encouragement and the strength that it imparts.
 - b. He has experienced the fulfillment of its promises in the prophets of old, as found in the Messiah.
4. The experience of receiving the Holy Spirit into his heart. "made partakers of the Holy Spirit." 6:4.
 - a. He is the Christian's comforter. John 14:16.
 - b. He keeps us holy. Gal. 5:16.
 - c. He reveals the things of God to us. I Cor. 2:10-13.

5. The experience of "tasting the powers of the age to come." 6:5.
 - a. This power that is to be known in its fullness in the age to come, is experienced right here by the Christian follower. Gal. 5:25.
 - b. It gives light to the intellect here; a change of heart and a change of character that produces the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Gal. 5:22-23.

II. THE SECOND TENSE IN THIS APOSTATE STATE IS THE POSSIBILITY OF FALLING. 6:1.

"And then fell away."

1. There *IS* the possibility of falling from this *great* experience of salvation mentioned in the preceding verses.
 - a. The greater the exaltation, when the fall comes, the greater the damnation.
 - b. The greater the exaltation, the more apt to injure others in that falling away.
2. There is the possibility of coming under the awfulest guilt.
 - a. "They crucify to themselves, the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." 6:5.
 - b. There is no crime in the annals of crime that surpasses the crucifixion of the Holy Son of God.
 - c. One having known the blessings of Salvation, then turning back to the ways of Damnation, takes part in the blackest crime on record; he is of the same Spirit as the crucifiers of Christ.
 - d. There is no sin that is lower, because there is no recovery from calling light, darkness; evil, good. Yes, Devilish evil, is labeled Heavenly good; there is no recovery from this.

III. THE HORROR OF THIS MORAL FALL, IS THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF RECOVERY!

1. "It is impossible to renew them unto repentance." 6:6.
Just as impossible as it is for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin. Heb. 10:4.
 - a. The reason for this utter impossibility is because of the moral condition of the heart of those guilty.
 - b. They scorn the only power that could ever bring them back.
 - c. They reject the mightiest power in the universe, the Love of God, as revealed in the death of Christ, for sinners.

CONCLUSION:

When men insult the God they once loved, treat with contempt the Son of God who deserves our highest regard, count the blood of the New Covenant as though it were filth, and then grieve the Holy Spirit, God's drawing power, what is there left to ever restore such a one to the Lord?

Let us, as Christians in the Grace of God, go on unto perfection and not sink back into perdition!

Julian the apostate is an outstanding example of one who crucified the Son of God afresh. Ten years previous to his being crowned emperor, he had been baptized into Christ and had accepted openly the way of the Cross. Immediately after his coronation he declared himself the restorer of the "Old Pagan Religions." In order to purge himself from the waters of Christian baptism, he had himself immersed in bull's blood. He sought to cleanse his hands from the touch of the bloodless emblems of the Eucharist, by holding in them the entrails of the victims offered to his heathen gods.

He departed farther and farther from the doctrines of Christ, even writing, at length, against the Christian religion. He was never recovered, and on the battlefield, when he was mortally wounded, he picked up a handful of his own blood and sand and threw it into the air, exclaiming, "Oh Galilean, thou has won." Jesus had won, in that He lived on; but Julian died an apostate; *be warned!*

GOD REMEMBERS OUR LABORS

Hebrews 6:10

"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and the love which ye showed toward his name, in that ye ministered unto the saints, and still do minister."

INTRODUCTION:

This text is not an isolated doctrine, but one that runs from the early part of the Old Testament through the entire New Testament. Hebrews 13:2 probably referred to the ministering to others that was done by Abraham in Genesis, the eighteenth chapter. Ministering to the saints begins in the home and from there saturates the church and lends color to society in general.

PROPOSITION: *Three aspects of ministering to the saints.*

- I. THEY HAD SET A GODLY EXAMPLE. "YE MINISTERED UNTO THE SAINTS, AND STILL DO MINISTER."

1. What variety of service did they perform?
 - a. It would take in those in poverty among their brethren. Paul had been instrumental in stirring up the Christians to send an offering to the suffering saints in Jerusalem. Acts 11:29-30; II Cor. Chapters 8-9; and I Cor. 16:1-3.
 - b. Paul reminds the Romans that he was on his way "Ministering unto the Saints" the offering given by the Macedonians. Rom. 15:25-26.
 - c. Many among the saints had lost everything they had in the persecutions. I Thess. 2:14-15; 3:4; II Thess. 1:4.
 - d. James 2:5 reminds us that God chose the poor in this world's goods to be rich in the faith.
 - e. The opposite was true, too, the rich oppressed the poor saints. Jas. 2:6.

We should be reminded that "The Rich Man" in Jesus' parable in Luke 16 was not the saint; it was Lazarus whom God honored.

2. They could have ministered sympathy for those afflicted.
 - a. "As ye are partakers of the sufferings, so also are ye of the comfort." II Cor. 1:7. Only those who have suffered, can genuinely comfort others in the same plight.
 - b. In Heb. 10:32-34, Paul commends them explicitly for one type of ministering in which they had a part. Jesus "bore our griefs and carried our sorrows."
 - c. In ministering to others they were like their Master. Mark 10:45.
3. They were *steadfast* in their ministering: "And still do minister."
 - a. So many followers of Christ are willing to help once or twice, but their hospitality soon wears through to the brass.
 - b. We are admonished to use every opportunity to minister. Gal. 6:10; I John 3:16-18.

II. THE HIGH CHARACTER OF THE MOTIVE THAT PROMPTED THIS SERVICE.

1. They ministered to the saints because of the Love of God.
 - a. They appreciated what God had done for them; so they passed on some of His love to others. Lu. 18:9-14.
 - b. In the proportion that we serve others, we serve Christ. Matt. 25:40-45.

- c. The Christian willingly consecrates his heart's holiest feelings and his body's best service to the Lord. Eph. 4: 22-32.
- d. In this service they demonstrated their love for their Father's children. I John 5:1-5.

III. THE REWARD THAT IS PROMISED OF GOD, WHO CAN NOT LIE.

1. Jesus taught it in Luke 12:32-33.
2. Paul taught it in Colossians. 3:24.
3. They will influence our judgment. II Cor. 5:10.
Certainly our good works are imperfect; and our good works actually proceed from the grace of God which he has given; we control the use of that Grace, and are rewarded for it.
4. The parable of the talents in Matthew 25 illustrates the willingness of God to reward his good and faithful servants.
5. Their ministering to others gives evidence that they had not fallen away to apostasy, which connects this with the main argument here. They still had the Spirit of Christ.
6. Paul reminds them that God has seen and continues to observe their works in ministering to the saints about them; nothing is overlooked. He keeps accurate records.
7. Jesus, in Matthew 10:42, had taught his disciples that they would not lose their reward for Christian service.

CONCLUSION:

Jesus told his disciples that he has gone to prepare for us, a place of many mansions; certainly a rich reward. There we shall behold the face of God. Psalms 17:15; Revelation 22:4. Then will be distributed the crowns of righteousness. II Timothy 4:8.

This example of Christian service, we should imitate, thereby becoming a good example to others and, at the same time, guarding ourselves from drifting into apostasy.

Let us meditate upon the reward of God based upon the Word of God; be patient; wait for the coming of the Lord to distribute His gifts. We should remember that he who serves his brother best, serves his Maker most effectively. Men know how to give rewards, how much more our Gracious Heavenly Father.

The king of Poland gave his noble servant, Zelialaus, a golden hand for the hand he had lost in serving his country; Agrippa

received of Caligula a chain of gold of the same weight as the chain of iron he had worn in defense of the "Mad king." We know that our God will surpass in love and rewards all the gifts ever given of men to men. He is the rewarder of the faithful. Let us serve Him.

ASSURANCE OF HOPE, THROUGH DILIGENCE

Hebrews 6:11-12

INTRODUCTION:

The apostle's great desire was that these disciples should be diligent, firm unto the end. He brings them the beautiful thought in "Full assurance of hope." Uncertainties melt away under the inspiring hope of the Gospel. However, it is not a question of what you did last year, yesterday or previously today, but a question of holding out in the faith, firm unto the end. He emphasizes the danger of slothfulness, as well as the reward for faithfulness.

As an encouragement to diligence, he alludes without giving their names, to the long line of worthy ones who, before his day, had honored and obeyed the Lord. He declares that they inherited the promises through faith and patience.

PROPOSITION: *Some of the ancient worthies, and how WE can follow them.*

I. WE SHOULD FOLLOW ABEL IN BRINGING THE FIRST AND BEST TO THE ALTAR AND SERVICE OF OUR GOD, ACCORDING TO HIS COMMAND.

Gen. 4:4 cf. Romans 12:1-2.

II. WE SHOULD FOLLOW ENOCH IN CALLING OURSELVES BY THE NAME OF THE LORD.

1. In walking with God; in His commandments. Gen. 5:21-24. Cf. Rom. 6:4, 8:1, 13:13; Phil. 3:16.

Even in the midst of a cursing, perverted and crooked generation we should "walk with God" to His glory.

III. WE SHOULD FOLLOW NOAH, BELIEVING GOD AND TAKING HIM AT HIS WORD, WHEN ALL NATURAL LAWS SEEM TO BE AGAINST IT. Gen. 6 through 8: cf.

The second coming of the Lord: to the unbeliever, it seems just as impossible today as the flood did in Noah's day. I Thess. 4:16; Acts 1:10-11.

The end of this solid old world seems unbelievable to the person who does not believe God nor take him at his Word. II Peter 3:10-13. God has spoken! The same God who spoke to Noah.

IV. WE SHOULD FOLLOW ABRAHAM IN FORSAKING HOME AND COUNTRY, WHEN THE CAUSE OF CHRIST DEMANDS IT. Gen. 12: cf. Matt. 10:37-39.

1. This loyalty in action is borne out by Paul. Acts 21:11-14; Eph. 6:20.

V. WE SHOULD FOLLOW ISAAC IN LEADING A QUIET AND PEACEFUL LIFE. Gen. 26:12-33 cf. I Tim. 2:2; II Thess. 3:7-13; I Thess. 4:11-12.

VI. WE OUGHT TO FOLLOW JACOB IN TAKING HOLD OF OUR GOD, AND HOLDING ON, EVEN IN PHYSICAL WEAKNESS, UNTIL WE OBTAIN THE BLESSING.

Gen. 32:24-32 cf. Luke 11:5-10; Luke 18:1-8; II Peter 3:8-9.

VII. WE SHOULD FOLLOW MOSES IN FAITH, PATIENCE AND UNDYING LOVE FOR OTHERS. Exodus 8:1, "Let my people go."

1. Moses *believed* God when it seemed impossible for the deliverance of Israel to take place. He kept giving Pharaoh God's command.
2. Moses was *patient* to the place of where he surpassed God's patience in dealing with murmuring Israel. Num. 16:24-25, 16:20-22.
3. Moses' love for Israel seems to be almost undying in its duration. Num. 14:11-19.

VIII. WE SHOULD FOLLOW JOSHUA IN TRYING TO TAKE THE LAND, THE WHOLE LAND, FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Josh. 23:1-11.

1. It certainly is our business to go into all the world and make disciples of every nation. Matt. 28:18-20.

IX. WE SHOULD FOLLOW SAMUEL IN GROWING IN FAVOR BOTH WITH GOD AND MAN.

1. I Sam. 2:18; I Sam. 3:1-9.
2. Jesus set the example to us as his followers. Luke 2:52.
3. The early church found favor with the people. Acts 2:47.

X. WE SHOULD FOLLOW DAVID IN CONSTANTLY AND EARNESTLY CONFESSING OUR SINS.

1. Psalms 51: and 38:18.
2. We are warned. I John 1:5-10.

CONCLUSION:

What a heritage God has placed before us in the saints we are to imitate, and through faith and patience we shall inherit the promises even as they did before us.

It is an age-old saying, and one of fearful and fathomless importance, that we are forming characters for eternity. Forming characters! Whose? Our own and many others! Both of these are eternal, and in that momentous fact lies the peril and responsibility of our being alive.

Thousands of my fellow beings will enter eternity with characters differing from those they would have carried thither if my life had not touched theirs in some way. When the day of eternity dawns, then the fingermarks in their primary formation will be seen plainly. Oh, may God grant that I may rejoice with the Saints of God who have gone on before me, and doubly rejoice with the saints of God who have become so, because of my influence on them.

“Lord, I want to be in that number, when the Saints go marching in.” Following the faithful men of God who have preceded me, is one way I can make my calling and election sure.

JESUS THE WORTHY ANCHOR OF THE SOUL

Hebrews 6:18-20

INTRODUCTION:

The hope that is set before us is Christ Jesus, who has gone on before and entered into the veil. The picture here is of a ship trying to make the harbor with the winds coming head on. The good captain has been tacking first this way and that, until he is now up close to the inlet. The wind is facing him and the channel is too narrow to tack any more. Sailors launch a large boat, take an anchor aboard it and pull out in front of the ship, drop the anchor, then come back, and by the use of the capstan they pull the ship toward the port. This procedure is kept up until the ship gets inside the harbor. The waves from the sea buffet the stern of the ship to help the sailors as they strain on the capstan. If the anchor holds, in time, with much labor, they will reach safety.

PROPOSITION: *The Christian's hope and the assurance of its realization.*

I. WHAT WILL THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE BE LIKE?

1. It will be a place where we are free from sin and suffering.
 - a. Heb. 4:9 speaks of heaven as a *rest*.
 - b. We can expect it will be rest from temptation.
 - c. Rest for the body, from pain.
 - d. Rest of mind; sorrow of spirit.

- e. There must be freedom from sin, or heaven would be marred and incomplete, as misery and discord enters in.
- 2. Heaven will be a place where Spiritual perfection is attained. Here we "Press on unto perfection," but there, we have it.
 - a. Here we do not have clear, correct, or comprehensive knowledge.
 - b. Here we do not have love that is perfect; there we will.
 - c. Here our purposes cross up our actions; there they will agree.
- 3. Heaven will be a place of Christ-like blessedness.
 - a. Heb. 6:20: Jesus, as our forerunner has entered there now. We hope to follow Him to the land of no sorrows.
 - b. We are "Looking for the blessed hope." Titus 2:13.
 - c. We were begotten again "unto a living hope." I Pet. 1:3-5.
 - d. This hope gives strength to our hands, quickens our feet in the race, and animates our inner man.
 - e. This hope, above the price of rubies, is contrasted with the transient hopes of this world for which men strive: such as worldly pleasures, worldly honors, worldly possessions. These do not satisfy; *That Does!*

II. THE STORMS THAT BESET US BEFORE WE ENTER THE HAVEN OF REST.

- 1. This hope is a stay for us, when the storms of life hit us head-on. We all suffer spiritual conflicts, temporal bereavements, bodily afflictions and diseases, family upsets and disappointments.
- 2. The soul is tried and in danger of loss by these storms.
 - a. Hidden rocks of some insidious sins are in the channel of life.
 - b. Storms of sorrow sweep over the decks, and winds of passion cause the ship to veer from her course.
 - c. Subtle pulls on the compass box cause dangers in navigation.
 - d. Every soul that reaches the "Haven of Rest" will be a battered and beaten hull, damaged by life's fierce storms; and many will have made "Ship-wreck of the faith," along the way.
- 3. The storms beat upon our frail barques, but the anchor holds.

- a. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast," etc.
- b. The ship's captain may not be able to see where the anchor lies, nor how deeply it is imbedded in solid earth in the bottom of the harbor, but he must put his trust in it, and while he rides out the storm, he keeps turning the capstan and "inching" into the harbor of rest. The true anchor, deeply "hooked," only grasps firmer when the pull comes. The Christian can say: "We have an anchor that keeps the soul steadfast and sure, while the billows roll, fastened to the Rock which can not move, grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love."

III. WE HAVE GOD'S ASSURANCE THAT OUR ANCHOR WILL HOLD.

1. The anchor is both sure and steadfast, and is firmly planted in that which is within the veil. I Tim. 1:1; Col. 1:27; Rom. 5:1-5; II Thess. 2:16-17.
2. He, our anchor, has been firmly planted within the veil.
 - a. "The veil," was a figurative expression of heaven. The mercy seat and ark of the covenant was there, with God's presence.
 - b. Jesus has gone there safely, and bids us come on the way. Acts 7:55, 9:4-6.
 - c. This was his promise to his disciples just before his demise. John 14:1-6.
 - d. Being joined to him here, assures us that we will be with him there, forever. "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

CONCLUSION:

"When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory."

Rutherford once said, "Our hope is not hung upon such an untwisted thread as, 'I imagine so,' or 'It is likely'; but the cable, the strong line of our fastened anchor, is the oath and promise of *Him* who is eternal verity; our salvation is fastened with God's own hand, and Christ's own strength, to the strong stake of God's unchangeable nature."

No one who knows what can happen at sea would go to sea in a vessel that carried no anchor, even though it were the greatest and most modern liner afloat, for circumstances might arise when the hope of the ship and all her company would depend, not on

the captain or the crew, the engines, the compass, or the steering gear, but on the anchor. When all else has failed, there is hope in the anchor. Christ is that anchor for our lives, and our final destiny. He is within the veil.

A GRASS-ROOTS SERMON

Hebrews 6:7-8

INTRODUCTION:

In this passage the apostle refers for illustration to two kinds of soil. In one plot there is good soil which, when it receives the rain on it, produces a fine crop to repay the man who cultivated it. This soil represents the fruit-bearing Christian, who "shall grow as a lily and he shall spread out like an olive tree." Then there is the other type of land, which no amount of cultivation can produce a decent crop. It may be plowed deep and sowed with the best of seed; the sunshine, rain and dew may come from above to assist it, but it is all in vain.

These two soils are personified; spoken of as though they had the attributes of a person, with will-power and ability to think, rather like the fig tree that Jesus cursed into barrenness. At any rate, we can easily imagine two kinds of soil as described in this text.

PROPOSITION: *The possibilities and judgment of two types of people, represented by two soils.*

I. HERE WE HAVE TWO MEN PLACED IN EXACTLY THE SAME RELATIONSHIP TO GOD IN REFERENCE TO THE BENEFITS RECEIVED FROM THE LORD.

1. They are like two pieces of land that lie side by side; which receive the same showers and same sunshine.
 - a. These are two men who have come under the same religious teaching.
 - b. They have the same peculiar religious advantages in each life.
 - c. They both have enough light given to them to be held accountable for neglecting salvation, in the Day of Judgment.
 - d. Having the same possibilities, these two men (or grounds), as used in this illustration, respond in very different ways.
 - (1) One is attentive, the other is negligent.

- (2) One is receptive, the other refuses instruction.
- e. The illustration says they both received, but *what* they received determined two entirely different results.
- (1) One man drinks the grace and truth of God, so that he is energized to put forth a bounteous crop of blessings.
 - (2) The other drinks in God's truth, seemingly, but when we look for Godly results, nothing shows up but weeds and briars.

This land was much like the parable in Matthew 13:18-23. All the land had the same seed sown on it, but each different type of soil brought forth a different ratio of production.

II. NOTICE THE DECLARATION OF EACH MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY AND THE CORRESPONDING JUDGMENT! "IF IT BEARETH THORNS AND THISTLES, IT IS REJECTED AND NIGH UNTO A CURSE; WHOSE END IS TO BE BURNED."

1. God judges according to our production! Good works can not be judged the same as evil works; God is a just God.
2. This doctrine is substantiated by the parable of the talents in Matt. 25:14-30.
3. God is not high-minded and autocratic, but deals justly.
4. We are the ones who determine how God will treat us in the ultimate; He deals in great and fair and eternal principles!
5. Among good farmers it is the practice to burn over unproductive land to destroy the seeds and to protect the land next to the weed patch. When we have been divinely blest so abundantly, and then return to the Good God only thorny and briarish products, then we must expect only the burning.
6. All evil things must be destroyed in finality, and if we place ourselves on that side, we must take the consequences.
7. We must choose wisdom or folly; wisely produce a good crop or foolishly build up the evil which God must destroy.

CONCLUSION:

Today is a day of decision, as we choose the life we will live here and the hope we must look forward to when this life comes to an end.

We are *men* made in the image and likeness of God. We have ability to choose good or bad, but with that ability comes the re-

sponsibility for the choice we make. Eternal rewards of blessedness can be ours, or the everlasting groans of the damned can be our place of eternal abode.

It takes decision and a will, to do anything worth-while. A good crop does not grow by accident, nor is the planting done by waiting. It demands decisive action.

William Lloyd Garrison, who did more to liberate slavery in America than any other man, commenced the publication of *The Liberator* with these memorable words: "I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retract a single line—and I will be heard." He was heard—and the chains of three million slaves fell off because of his consecrated service.

It takes just such decision to make a productive life for God, and God will hold each one of us accountable, when we stand before Him, for the decisions we have made and the crop we have produced!

GOD'S PRIEST SUPREME

Hebrews 7:1-10

INTRODUCTION:

In the preceding chapter, the apostle introduces Melchisedec, king of Salem and priest of the most high God. In this chapter, verses 1-4, he gives us the most extended account of him found in the Oracles of God. Here, the writer is not trying to write a biography of Melchisedec, but only to emphasize some of his peculiarities of Priesthood. He was contemporary of Abraham and occupied the office of both King and Priest simultaneously. There is no record given of his ordination as priest or of his retiring from that office. In this way he is contrasted with the Levitical priesthood. Melchisedec's priesthood was independent. The Aaronic priesthood was dependent. Jesus was made a priest after the order of Melchisedec, and Melchisedec was a man.

PROPOSITION: *What do we know about this Priest Supreme?*

I. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT MELCHISEDEC, AS A MAN?

1. We find from verses 1-2 all that is known about him as a man. cf. This is verified in Genesis 14:18-20.
 - a. Here we are introduced to him as an outstanding person; his high offices are made known; his two nomenclatures are revealed.

- b. He appears suddenly, apparently from his capitol, gives a significant blessing in the bread and wine.
 - c. The homage that Abraham renders to him is dwelt on and emphasized. He was greater than Abraham.
2. Some things about Melchisedec are concealed.
- a. His genealogy is not given, which is contrary to Oriental custom; neither is his birth or his priestly pedigree given.
3. From verse 3 we find Melchisedec is a type.
- a. The prefiguration of Christ is graphically given in the brief account in Genesis 14. He was "made like unto the Son of God."
 - b. Jesus Christ is King of Peace and Righteousness; giving peace in proportion to righteousness.
 - c. We are a "Royal priesthood" and He is the *High Priest* of that exalted priesthood; wearing the Priestly garb as well as the Crown of the King of Kings.
 - d. His Priesthood had no beginning date and no consummation date, so He is supreme in the field of Religious leaders, surpassing the Levitical priesthood.

II. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT HIS SUPREMACY OVER AARON? Heb. 7:4-10.

This should be considered carefully since it is related to the high office of our High Priest, His glory and regency.

1. Melchisedec is superior to Abraham, who was the illustrious ancestor of the whole tribe of Levi (vs. 4-7).
 - a. Abraham was that "Friend of God," yet Melchisedec is greater.
 - b. To the Hebrew and Christian alike, he was "Father Abraham." Gal. 3:7, yet Melchisedec was greater.
 - c. He ranks above every illustrious name of the Patriarchs, yet Melchisedec was greater. He humbly bows before his Superior and pays to him tithes. Gen. 14:20; Heb. 7:4-6.
2. Melchisedec is superior to Abraham in that he blest Abraham. (vs. 6-7.)
 - a. The less is blest of the Greater. (vs. 7.)
The foreign Great Priest receives in his audience the head of the race that was to bring in the Messiah. Gal. 3:8.
3. Melchisedec is Superior to Aaron and the Levites in that he is to live forever; never dying.
 - a. He appears as a living Priest, *only!* He had no successor!

- b. Aaron's sons inherited their office from father to son; Melchisedec had his inherent, and we know of no predecessor.
 - c. These all give us a more perfect prefiguring of the Great Priest, *Christ!*
4. Melchisedec is superior to Aaron, in that the Levites, at the time Abraham paid tithes, were in his loins, and in him paid tithes. (vs. 9-10.)
 - a. When Abraham confessed the superiority of Melchisedec to himself, it included all his posterity, and this would include all the Levites; every high priest after Aaron's house.
 5. Melchisedec is proven superior in that while the Levites were made priests without an oath, he was made the Great Priest with an oath of God. Heb. 7:20-22.
 - a. The divine oath shows the immutability of the thing sworn, as well as its certainty.
 6. Melchisedec is proven superior to Aaron in that his office is *not transferrable* (Aaron's was). Christ's death did not hinder him from continuing in his services as High Priest of the everlasting covenant.
 7. Melchisedec is proven superior to Aaron in that his character was holy and without spot or wrinkle. (vs. 26.)
 - a. He never did have to offer a sacrifice for his *own* sins. Some of the High Priests after Aaron's household had been very wicked men (Caiphas).

CONCLUSION:

He is ministering now in the *real sanctuary*; not in a moving tent. His work was not in a stone temple that would be torn down and ploughed under. Jesus now ministers in "Heaven itself." He is our immortal and heavenly Priest. He is Deity personified, and his divine nature is the basis of his eternal life. That makes him perfect in his power to save, from the guttermost to the uttermost.

How rich are the terms applied to Salvation in Christ. He is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by Him. What can go further than uttermost? Dr. Clarke says "He is able to save from the power, guilt, nature, and punishment of sin—to all intents, degrees, and purposes; and always, and in and through all times, places and circumstances; for all this is implied in the original word." The original word seems to combine the two ideas

of continuity and utmost completeness. Hence, Jesus, our Melchisedecian High Priest, saves forever, and to the uttermost; superior to Aaron!

OUR PRIEST, HOLY, HARMLESS, UNDEFILED AND SEPARATED FROM SINNERS

Hebrews 7:26-28

INTRODUCTION:

Man not only needed a priest, but he needed a priest who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, higher than the heavens. One who, surpassing the priests of old, could effect our everlasting reconciliation by presenting Himself once to God, forever. Our High Priest has the complete and unfailing remedy for sin. Man needs a priest to offer sacrifices on his behalf; as a representative whom God will recognize. He must be *the* Priest, God will accept. There must be a fitness between the man who holds the office, and the duties of that office.

PROPOSITION: *The specified qualities are met in our Melchisedecian High Priest.*

I. HE IS PERFECT IN HIS QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

1. He IS holy as demanded. V. 26.
 - a. Luke 1:35—"the holy thing which is begotten in thee, shall be called the Son of God." Acts 4:27—"Thy holy Servant." He was inwardly and truly holy, complete.
 - b. His holiness did not consist of his being consecrated to his office, but in his entire life. John 1:47.
 - c. There was no need for the old Priestly insignia to be stamped on his garments, "Holy unto the Lord," because he was holy through and through. God said of Him "I am well pleased." Matthew 3:17. Judas had to say "I have betrayed innocent blood."
2. He was harmless as described. V. 26.
 - a. No wrong was ever done by Him; therefore, he did not have to offer a sin sacrifice for himself in order to be clean so he could offer sacrifices for others.
 - b. He was always free from sin; preincarnate and incarnate.
 - c. In him was "no guile." I Peter 1:22.
3. He was UNdefiled. V. 26.
 - a. Sin surely is a polluting thing; ceremonial cleansing was demanded of the O. T. Priests, for their sins.

- b. Jesus was not spotted; he was unspoiled; no sins or impurities ever came on him. He had no guilt to confess and no guilt to expiate.
- c. He was undefiled both legally and morally.
- 4. He was separated from all sinners.
 - a. Not like the Levitical priests who were forbidden to touch any person or thing that would defile them. Lev. 21: 10-15.
 - b. This does not mean that he never associated with men who were sinners. Matt. 9:11 shows us that he did and was condemned for it by the ignorant.
 - c. It was said of Him that "He was a friend of publicans and sinners." "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." But *He* did not sin, nor become involved in their sins.
 - d. Though he met with all types of men, he never let drop that separation he had, from sinners. He never contacted the slightest moral defilement.

II. HE IS PERFECT IN THE POSITION HE NOW OCCUPIES. "MADE HIGHER THAN THE HEAVENS." vs. 26.

1. Heb. 1:3—"when he had made purification of sins sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."
2. Heb. 2:9—"We behold him . . . even Jesus because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste of death for every *man*."
3. Phil. 2:9—"Wherefore God also highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name that is above every name."
4. Rev. 5:13—" . . . Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, forever and ever."

The position He now occupies is superior, perfect, in that it is a position of highest honor in Heaven itself.

III. THE SACRIFICE IS *PERFECT*. 7:27.

1. The relative worth of His sacrifice. "he offered up himself."
 - a. Here we find the first mention of him offering up himself (in this epistle). But from here on through the book it will often be repeated.
 - b. The sacrifice was not an animal or a thing, but a *person*. Not just a "human sacrifice," but the sacrifice of the *only perfect* being ever to live among men.

- c. Notice in what spirit the sacrifice was given. It was not taken "against its will" as "the Lamb" sacrifices were. Here the "Great High Priest" offers up "himself, willingly," a ransom for all mankind.
- 2. The all-inclusiveness of his sacrifice, and conclusiveness.
 - a. "This he did once for all, when he offered up himself."
 - b. His sacrifice will never have to be accomplished again, because his sacrifice was perfect. (Not like the Jewish sacrifices.)

CONCLUSION:

When Christ comes again, he will not come as a sacrifice, nor as a priest, but as the conquering Son of God. Then he will be the King above every king; supreme, perfect, as Ruler, Exalted Potentate—Grand Master!

Arnot represents Christ as a king's son, who offered Himself as hostage for a great group of rebellious subjects. He took their place and they were set free. Then, because of their being freed, He must bear the punishment due them. Christ willingly gave himself up for us, dying for us, that we might escape the pangs of eternal death and live eternally with him. Because he was the Priest, holy, undefiled and separated from sinners, God was willing to accept the sacrifice of himself for all the sinners of all the world, and forever.

Oh friend, if you have not come to him in genuine gratitude, and with a broken heart, do it today, while the sacrifice avails for you.

PAUL'S EFFORT TO SET THE HEBREW CHRISTIANS RIGHT CONCERNING THE OLD COVENANT AND THE NEW

Hebrews 8:1-13

INTRODUCTION:

The argument is completed with the close of the preceding chapter so what follows is a summary restatement. In the Patriarchal dispensation there were many priests, but only one Melchisedec. Under the Mosaic dispensation there were many priests, but only one High Priest at a time. Under the Gospel dispensation every Christian is a priest, but there is only one High Priest who is after the order of Melchisedec. His place is on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. This verse brings out his present heavenly glory. It also emphasizes that his being in heaven, is to be recognized as High Priest of the whole race.

PROPOSITION: *Notice the relationship between the Old and the New Covenant.*

I. THE OLD COVENANT HAD FAULTS IN IT. V. 7. "If the first covenant had been faultless," certainly infers that it was imperfect; had faults.

1. We know what covenant he had reference to here, by referring to V. 9. It was the one made when he brought them forth from Egypt.
 - a. Hence it could not have been any covenant that was made in the Garden of Eden or with some of the Patriarchs.
 - b. This covenant was given in Ex. 20:1-17 and referred to by Moses as "The Covenant." Ex. 34:28.
 - c. This covenant was not given *before* the days of the Exodus, for Moses says so in Deut. 5:2-4.
 - d. This Old Covenant had been renewed often and to various people in places of leadership in Israel. Josh. 24:24-26; II Chron. 15:12-15; Nehemiah 9:13-14.
 - e. This Old Covenant, the Ten Commandments, became the constitutional law, around which revolved all of the Priestly laws and sacrificial duties of the tabernacle.
 - f. It was incomplete, imperfect, for the dispensation of Grace.
2. The Mosaic laws and institutions were only preparatory for the Gospel dispensation period; legal, rather than Spiritual.
 - a. "They brought no works unto perfection."
 - b. They were suitable for the childhood of the human race. Gal. 3:23-24 and 5:1-4.
 - c. The Old Covenant was given all in symbols and pre-figures.

II. GOD GAVE A PROMISE OF THE COMING OF THE NEW COVENANT. Jer. 31:31 ff.

1. The quoting of this passage was to give the Old Testament its proper relation to the one that was to come that would surpass it.
 - a. It was to have better promises; better sacrifice; better Priesthood; better Temple, and more enduring.
 - b. This promise was originally given just as Israel was being taken into captivity in Babylon; to sustain them in trial. Jer. 31:31.

- c. This Covenant, Israel had broken many times, till God came to "regard them not." V. 9.
 - (1) He allowed first Israel and then Judah to go captive.
- d. Jeremiah was inspired of God to give this prophecy to cheer the poor captives; telling them there was to be a *new* and *better* Covenant.
- e. This new Covenant would be with all Israel, which would include all Gentiles who accepted the Messiah and became Children of God.

III. THE NEW COVENANT SHOULD BE STUDIED IN CONTRAST TO THE OLD.

1. It was to have "better promises." His laws would be put "into the inward mind, and on their heart also will I write them." V. 10.
 - a. The Old Testament was controlled by external commands, but the New would be motivated by moral and spiritual principles.
 - b. Those first laws were written on "Tablets of stone," but now the New Covenant is "written in our hearts, known and read of all men . . . with the Spirit of the living God . . . tables that are hearts of flesh." II Cor. 3:2-3.
 - c. The pity of it is, we have whole denominations now who want to go back to the babyhood of the race, and dress in the clothes of an infant, laying great emphasis upon the Ten Commandments, the old Stone Covenant!
2. Under the New Covenant there would be a wide-spread knowledge of God. In fact, every citizen of the new kingdom must be born again in order to get into it. John 3:3-5.
 - a. Under the old, every child had to be born an Israelite and then taught to know the Lord; but in the new, everyone must be taught, to get into the Kingdom.
 - b. Now the Holy Spirit is our great teacher, not merely Moses.
 - c. There is no secret recondite society that is given special attention, "For all shall know me." vs. 11.
3. Under the new there is complete forgiveness for all sin, while under the old, the sins of each year were rolled ahead. V. 12.
 - a. The sins must be forgiven before the Holy Spirit can come in to sanctify and to instruct.

- b. Moral guilt could not be taken away by animal sacrifices. Heb. 9:12.
- c. Now "The blood of Christ cleanses us from all sins," and into that cleansed heart comes the Holy Spirit to take up His abode to strengthen and produce fruit pleasing to God.

CONCLUSION:

A skeptic once tried to confuse a colored man who was a Christian, by contradictory passages in the Bible; so he asked how it could be that we were in the Spirit and the Spirit in us, at the same time. He was halted by this reply: "Oh sir, dats easy; aint no puzzle at all. It's like this; I puts that poker in the fire, and pretty soon the fire is in the poker."

But let us remember this is our privilege under the New Covenant, and it was never enjoyed by the common citizens of the Israelitish or Mosaic dispensation. Let us all have Jesus for our Saviour and then allow his gift of the Holy Spirit to bless our lives, and the lives of all those we contact daily.

OUR HIGH PRIEST, NOT AFTER THE LAW OF CARNAL COMMANDMENT

Hebrews 8:8-13

INTRODUCTION:

We have had stated specifically that astounding fact, for the Hebrew, given by both prophet and apostle, that there was to be a New Covenant because the old had filled its place in the economy of redemption.

It is a striking fact that the New Covenant was made with the same people who had broken the first. With these definite statements before us, there are still those who try to make it appear that the two Covenants are the same. The Scripture says that the new was not to be according to the old, or like it. Under the Old Covenant, the law was written on cold, pulseless stone. Moses was the Mediator of the old.

PROPOSITION: *Our High Priest and His Covenant are NOT after or like the old, in three ways.*

I. THE LAW OF OUR HIGH PRIEST WAS NOT LIKE THE ONE GIVEN IN THE OLD.

- § 1. The first was truly materialistic and the new is spiritual.
 - a. The old was written on tablets of stone, but the new is not; it is written on the hearts of men.

- b. Under the old, Israel was led by visible symbols, but under the new it is not so; it is now guided by Spiritual influence.
 - (1) Our new law is present in the mind. "I will put my laws into their mind."
 - (2) By the Spirit that gave us life in the New Birth, we are led to daily produce from within, the fruit of the Holy Spirit.
 - (3) Our new law under Christ, is treasured in the heart. "And on their heart also will I write them." Anything that has become dear to us, we speak of as being close to our hearts. The New Covenant is highly prized by the Christian. It is loved above all else.
 - (4) Proverbs tells us that "Out of the heart are the issues of life," so God in His infinite wisdom has placed the New Covenant of the New High Priest in our hearts, now. This law, which is indelibly placed in our hearts, causes us to live it in our lives. It is most effective! The Holy Spirit gives it and He illumines our minds.

II. THE EXPRESSION OF LOVE AS GIVEN UNDER THE NEW COVENANT IS *NOT* THE SAME AS THE OLD. IT IS A MUCH HIGHER MANIFESTATION.

- 1. Under the new we have a new relation; "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."
 - a. God is the chief blessing of the New Covenant; not merely material blessings. We have all things in Him. I Co. 3:21-23.
 - b. He becomes the source of our wisdom, power, spiritual satisfaction, spiritual instruction, consolation, sanctification; and in Heaven, which is His, we abide forever.
- 2. Under the New Covenant we have a new relation, not like the old. "They shall be to me a people."
 - a. This is a great privilege that carries with it responsibilities. We expect blessings from Him who is our High Priest, but He expects us to fulfill our obligations, too.
 - (1) We are to worship Him; love Him; consecrate our service to Him, and joyfully comply with His loving commands.

III. THE KNOWLEDGE WE HAVE IN THE NEW COVENANT, UNDER THE NEW HIGH PRIEST, IS *NOT* LIKE THAT OF THE OLD COVENANT.

1. Every Jewish child was taught from infancy to know the law, and through it be recognized as an Israelite; but here it is stated "and they shall not teach every man his fellow-citizen, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord."
 - a. Under the New Covenant and the New High Priest, every man or every citizen must *know the Lord* before he can enter the Kingdom. John 3:3-5.
 - b. Knowing the Lord is the highest subject about which any man can learn; most sublime in character; extends over the whole of life's relations; and has the greatest influence on both the man and on others.
2. Knowing God is the most excellent source of knowledge.
 - a. It is the purest in that it comes from the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Each Christian has the gift of the Holy Spirit in him.
 - c. The Spirit leads us into all truth.
3. We have clearer mental conception of knowledge now made available.
 - a. Because it comes directly from God, it will be clearer.
4. The knowledge of the New is not like the Old in that it is a wider knowledge. "All shall know me from the least to the greatest of them."
 - a. All the people in this kingdom under this New High Priest, would know Him primarily, but ultimately this knowledge was to extend to all the world and unto every creature in it. It is world-wide, not like Israel, national.

CONCLUSION:

That is why Jesus gave the Great Commission in Mark 16:15-16; it is first to bring salvation and then to send salvation, and He depends upon citizens of the new kingdom to do that work.

I have many railroad men in my congregation, and this means something to them: How long is an order in effect on the railroad? The answer is, it is in effect until either it is fulfilled, superseded, or nullified. For example, if an order requires that a train be taken to a certain destination, the fulfillment of the order takes place when the train reaches the destination named in the order. In spite of any trouble or difficulty, the trainmen are under that order until it is fulfilled, unless an order comes from headquarters superseding it.

Jesus gave the great commission, containing God's means for the saving of lost men and women of all the nations. That order still stands. It has never been superseded nor nullified. That order is in effect right now. It is the New Covenant, under the New High Priest, who is both *King* and *Priest*, eternal in both functions, for all men.

THE OLD AND THE NEW CONTRASTED IN WORSHIP

Hebrews 9:1-10

INTRODUCTION:

This is a continuation of the eighth chapter. There, the emphasis was upon the old and new contrasted in their laws; here the contrast is in the worship of the two covenants. In each, the Lord demands our worship, homage and our praise. The old "Tent" or Tabernacle very appropriately typified the temporal quality of the old, as well as fitted itself into the wanderings of the people in the wilderness and in the occupying period of Israel's history. The old was a worldly tabernacle or sanctuary. It consisted of the court, the holy place, and the holy of holies. The court could be a type of the world, the holy place a type of the church, and the holy of holies a type of heaven.

PROPOSITION: *The Hebrew's sanctuary; its services and their significance.*

I. THE HEBREW SANCTUARY AS DESCRIBED IN 9:1-5; HAD TWO COMPARTMENTS.

1. The Holy place, measured 15 X 15 X 30 feet. (Fifteen feet high, fifteen feet wide, and thirty feet long.)
 - a. In it was the "Lamp stand" signifying Spiritual light which God gives to us through the Holy Spirit inspired Word.
 - b. Then there was the table containing the shew bread, emblematic of the Lord's supper in the Christian dispensation.
 - c. The altar of incense, directly before the veil that separated the Holy place from the Holy of Holies, emblematic of the prayers of the saints; closest to heaven we ever get, while here on the earth, is in prayer.

Each of these symbols in the New Testament has a spiritual significance that reaches into the heart and life of the Christian.

2. The Holy of Holies, measured a 15 foot cube. 9:3-5. It was separated from the Holy Place by a richly wrought veil and was the dwelling place of the presence of Jehovah God.

There are several items mentioned as belonging in this Holiest place.

- a. The ark of the covenant, which was the main article of furniture in the place. It was the heart of the entire tabernacle service, showing forth the presence of the God who had freed them and made a covenant with them.
 - (1) In the ark was the old covenant written on stone. Ten Commandments, Ex. 34:28.
 - (2) Beside the stone tablets was Aaron's rod that budded.
 - (3) Then there was in it the pot of manna; God's gift from heaven to sustain them in the wilderness.
 - (4) Above the ark were the Cherubim surrounding the Shekina, or the lighted presence of God.
 - (5) The lid of the ark was known as the "Mercy Seat of God." It was sprinkled with blood to hide from God the sins of the people, symbolically.
- b. Then there was the golden censer which was carried by the high priest, into the Holy of Holies each day of Atonement.

Included in these two parts of the tabernacle plus the outer court, we have depicted the wonderful scheme of redemption being revealed in due season to the Israelites and then to the world, through Christ.

II. THE SERVICES OF THE TABERNACLE AND COURT.

1. In the outer court all "Clean" persons were allowed to come.
2. In the Holy Place, only the sons of Aaron were allowed to enter. V6. They sprinkled the blood of the sin offerings before the second veil; they changed the shew bread each Sabbath; they burned incense on the altar of incense and filled the lamps and trimmed the wicks of the lamp stand.
3. In the Holy of Holies, the High Priest only entered and that just one day in a year; on the day of Atonement. No one else was ever allowed to enter it. On that day, he entered it three times; with incense, blood of the bullock and with the blood of the goat. All of these were necessary types and had meaning for the Israelite.

III. WHAT WERE THE SIGNIFICANCES OF EACH?

1. Probably the chief symbol represented here is that God has a way planned for the redemption of man; that an approach

to Him purely through nature is insufficient; no LODGE has the key to God's forgiveness.

2. All of the tabernacle had to do with the prefigurement of that which was to come, Christianity. Heb. 8:8-12.
3. The High Priest entering into the Holy of Holies, prefigures Christ's entrance into heaven on our behalf. (No other person has experienced the assumption), catholicism to the contrary.
4. Heaven is prefigured in the Holy of Holies.
5. The church is prefigured in the Holy Place where we are all priests.
6. The Altar of Sacrifices was "Outside the church" and must precede entrance into the Holy Place.
7. The whole ceremony, cleansing bodies, was typical of the coming Christian dispensation in which the souls of men are made clean. The whole of it was a promise that some day the kingdom of Believers would be open to all men in every land.

CONCLUSION:

Now, "There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emanuel's veins, And sinners plunged beneath that flood, loose all their guilty stains."

A young mill worker came to a revival meeting on a Saturday night; heard the gospel for the first time in his life. He believed he was a sinner and saw that Christ died for him and that God would accept his gift on his behalf. He accepted Christ, repented of his sin and was baptized that very hour of the night. He was in all the services on the Lord's day, having to walk twelve miles to be there. He was killed in a logging accident the following Tuesday after witnessing to all the ungodly on the job all day Monday. As he was near death he looked into the doctor's eyes, and said, "I was thinking how wonderful it is, while I am losing my own blood, I have come under the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, just in time."

SURPASSINGLY WONDERFUL

Hebrews 9:11-14

INTRODUCTION:

The articles of the furniture occupying these different apartments were admirably adapted to the designs of the great "Supreme Architect of the Universe." Their positions were very significant;

First, the altar or sacrifice; second, the laver or washing; third, the first veil or line of separation between the world and holy place; fourth, the table or shew bread; fifth, the candlestick or light; sixth, the altar of incense or worship; seventh, the second veil or death; eighth, the ark and cherubim or the presence and glory of God. They are in the correct order to teach most effectively the way from sin to life before God.

PROPOSITION: *The New Covenant far surpasses the Old covenant.*

I. THE HIGH PRIEST THAT SURPASSES THE OLD ONES.

With the coming of the long looked for Messiah there has come the obtaining of the "Spiritual Israel" that surpasses the old "fleshly Israel."

1. Our High Priest is "The Anointed one," "Messiah" or "Christ." He has been ordained from of old; accredited before God and men; and equipped to officiate in holy perfection.
 - a. He is the Minister of a better dispensation, than Aaron.
 - b. His blessings surpass Aarons and the Levites.
 - c. Many of the old priesthood fell far below the fleshly standards set for them by God, but with us we have the True Priest, Deity incarnated, Perfect man and Perfect God Combined!
 - d. All of the old priests died; our High priest has died and been victorious over the grave. Now He has entered once for all into the Holy Place to make intercession for us.

II. THEN THERE IS THE TABERNACLE THAT SURPASSES THE OLD TENT IN THE WILDERNESS.

1. The description as given in Exodus 25: through 29: reveals it to be a marvelous work of riches and artistic architecture.
2. It was expensively adorned and grandly constructed.
3. Every phase of it was a symbolical teaching of the plan of God that would not be fully revealed for centuries. It was an earthly building with a heavenly message.
 - a. The Ark marvelously demonstrated the presence of God.
 - b. The Cherubim constantly reminded them of heaven and its superhuman creatures.
 - c. It was finally a "building made with hands," therefore it was temporal and earthlike.

4. By contrast and in far more excellent splendor, our High Priest ministers in a "Heavenly Tabernacle, not made with hands" more exquisite in design, purpose and splendor.
 - a. The new is located in heaven, which was only typified in the old.
 - b. Our Priesthood and tabernacle is "not of this creation;" it is invisible, and in the very presence of God in the highest heaven.
 - c. Our High Priest is supreme, and he intercedes for his people.
 - d. The expression of His will, as given in the Bible, is man's only means of salvation. John 14:6.

III. THE SACRIFICE THAT HAS BEEN OFFERED SURPASSES ALL THE OTHERS COMBINED.

1. Romans 3:23-26 indicates that salvation comes to us only through a just God who justifies us by accepting the death of His son as a penalty for all sin. That sacrifice surpasses ALL!
2. Our sacrifice is Christ, who sacrificed himself as a propitiatory, and vicarious sacrifice.
3. As the priest entered into the holy place by blood, Christ is said to have "entered into the holy place by his own blood."
 - a. His sacrifice of "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the WORLD" surpasses all other altar victims. His was human blood, holy blood and heavenly blood.

God accepted that blood sacrifice as sufficient to atone for all the sins of all the men who ever have or ever will dwell on the earth.

IV. SO OUR CLEANSING SURPASSES THE CLEANSING OF THE OLD TABERNACLE.

1. The Levitical priests' offerings did purify the body and roll ahead the sins of the people.
2. This was done legally and ceremonially according to the laws God gave for that purpose.
3. The blood of bulls and goats gave only a cleansing of the flesh and a setting of the Israelites aside for the purpose of serving God, legally and ceremonially.
4. In our cleansing, the blood of Christ cleanses us from ALL Sin; cleanses our conscience from dead works, and now we serve God (from the new life given to the inner man,) in purity and assuredness, never known under the old regime.

- a. We are purified from "Dead works," i.e. all other forms of cleansing invented by man or used by God in the past.
- b. In our sacrifice we have not only the forgiveness of our sins but we have His promise that we will have within side.

CONCLUSION:

How our souls should rejoice in the privileges that are ours, living under the New and more perfect dispensation of Grace; the Great Melchisedecian Priesthood of Christ. How we ought to strive to reach others who are lost; more lost than the Israel of types. Our Christ can save ANY body; not only Jews, and it is He alone who can save. Let us lead men and women to the surpassingly wonderful Saviour from sin, who writes our names in the Lamb's book of life.

In St. George's chapel in Westminster Abbey is a memorial to the victims in London of world war II. It is a great book that contains the names of sixty thousand citizens; old, young, rich, poor, well and ill from all classes. A light is shining down on the book and each day a page is turned, making a living memorial to the dead. We have a surpassingly more wonderful book, not a book of death, but a book of life. It is in heaven and it contains all the names of all the men and women and children of all nations of all the world and in all ages who have become obedient unto the faith. All will be in the light forever, through Jesus our surpassingly wonderful saving High Priest. "Oh I want To See Him, Look upon His Face" — Don't You?

GOD'S SACRIFICE FOR MAN'S SINS

Hebrews 9:11-28

INTRODUCTION:

The world's condition is clearly pointed out, here. It is one of "sin" not merely acts of sinning; nor is it some great crime we have committed; it is our wicked, sinful nature with which He deals. Men have tried to deny that they are sinners; Christian Science, falsely so-called, tries this. Others have hid their sins; worldly philosophies and lodges practice this. Some think they can work and burn out their sinful nature; Catholicism runs their people to death in this treadmill. God, so different from man's religions who offer sacrifices to their Gods, provides a full and complete sacrifice for the offending man.

PROPOSITION: *What sort of a sacrifice is this noble gift of God?*

- I. **IT IS A HOLY, PURE AND INNOCENT SACRIFICE.** Heb. 9:14; I Pet. 2:21-24. Making the souls of all those who accept it, **PURE, HOLY AND INNOCENT**, or **JUSTIFIED**. Heb. 9:14; Romans 8:1; 5:16-19; 6:16-19.
- II. **THIS SACRIFICE WAS MADE WITHOUT ANY PROTEST, WILLINGLY.** Isa. 53:7; John 10:15-18; Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 10:5-9; Through His bleeding and dying, we have our complete redemption. Heb. 9:22; I Peter 2:24; John 3:16; 1:29; Rom. 3:25; Eph. 1:17; Rev. 1:5.
- III. **THIS SACRIFICE WAS THE SACRIFICE OF DEITY HIMSELF;** Heb. 9:26; I Peter 2:24; John 3:16; I Cor. 15:3; Acts 4:13; Isa. 53:5-6; Through this sacrifice, the guiltless for the guilty it became substitutionary; Isa. 53:6; Heb. 9:28; Dan. 9:24; Isa. 53:4; 53:10-12; Matt. 20:28; **MARK 14:24;** John 6:51.
- IV. **THIS SACRIFICE PREPARED AND OFFERED, IS COMPLETE, FINAL AND ETERNAL.** Heb. 9:12; 9:25-28; Heb. 13:12; Acts 5:30-31; Rom. 3:24-25; Rom. 5:6-11; II Cor. 5:14-19. This sacrifice God has made available to all men, everywhere in every age. John 3:16; Heb. 2:9; 1 John 2:2; Col. 1:14; I Tim. 2:6; Heb. 1:3; 2:9; 10:10-20; Tit. 2:14.

We as sinners are all under the condemnation of God. Rom. 6:23. We are all in "Ward" under sin, and in need of some one to give us a pardon, because we are "broke" in the sight of God.. Our righteousness is as "filthy rags" in His sight. Every man is in that same condition, because they have all sinned, therefore no man can put up "Bail" for any other sinner. If we never sinned again as long as we lived, we would still have the mark against us of former sins.

Being condemned and in need of a pardon, we are much like an old river-boat "Mate" who had been put in the penitentiary for his crimes. Governor Stewart, a former governor of Missouri, faced this condemned man seeking for a pardon. He recognized the man as a former mate of a river steamboat on which he had served as a cabin boy. The convict had been notorious for his cruelty to those at work under him on the boat.

In handing him his pardon, the Governor said: "I want you to promise me that you will never again take a stick of wood and drive a sick little boy out of his berth on a stormy night, because

you will not live long enough for that boy to grow up to be the Governor to give you another pardon for your crimes. You mistreated me; sinned against me, and I now, in the name of the state of Missouri, pardon you.”

We as lost men and women ought to be happy to know and realize that “He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.”

“There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Emanuel’s veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains; **LOSE ALL THEIR GUILTY STAIN**”

This was made possible by the sacrifice God sent, for the sins of those who had rebelled against Him.

DEATH AND WHAT COMES AFTER IT

Hebrews 9:27-28

INTRODUCTION:

Suppose all of us could die as nobly as Socrates, of whom it was said, “He died like a philosopher;” it is certain, we can not die as Jesus, for “He died like a God.” Death comes to every man, for “It is appointed unto man once to die.” God allowed Jesus to meet death, too, but on the outcome of His death, rested the hope of all men who must die thereafter.

PROPOSITION: *Two men’s deaths and two men’s appearances after death.*

I. THE DEATH OF MAN.

1. The *sentence* was past upon him from the first of his sinning. Gen. 3:19. Abel was blest in his righteous death, and Cain was cursed by having to continue to live, constantly expecting death to pounce upon him. It is as natural for man to die as it is for him to be born. Death is simply the cessation of the miracle of life. Then Ecc.12:7 takes places.
2. The *event* of death is certain. Joshua said, “I am going the way of all the earth,” when it came time for him to die. The woman from Tekoa told David, “We must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again;” “Man is like a vanity; his days are like a shadow that passeth away.” Psa. 144:4. “No man hath power over the spirit to retain it.” Ecc. 8:8.

3. This death is done only once, by mortal man. Heb. 9:27. It is never repeated, after death. This gives us cause to be concerned as to whether we are prepared for it or not. Many other activities of life are left open for us to repeat and perfect, but not so with death. Death never recurs to mortal man. It is the "way of no return."

II. NOW NOTICE THE DEATH OF CHRIST. Heb. 9:28.

1. "Offered to bear our sins," makes Him our sacrifice.
 - a. "Him who knew no sin, he made to be sin, on our behalf." II Cor. 5:21.
2. His death was sufficient for all men's sins. "To bear the sins of the many." cf. also Heb. 2:9. "By the grace of God he should taste of death for every man." God "delivered him up for us all" Paul taught in Rom. 8:32.
3. The sacrifice which Jesus made in His death can never be repeated.
 - a. He was to come into this world only ONCE as our Redeemer!
 - b. The atonement which He made was complete; therefore it needs never to be repeated. It was perfectly efficacious and God has made it to be perpetual. Heaven could ask for no more and there is nothing left for man to desire.

III. THE APPEARANCE OF MAN AFTER DEATH. "Once to die and after this, Judgment." There is where he appears after death.

- a. This is due every man. II Cor. 5:10.
- b. God has appointed a day. Acts 17:30-31.
- c. Then, every man shall bear his own burden. Gal. 6:5.
- d. There is no escape for the neglectors of Christ. Heb. 2:2-3.
- e. Then Luke 12:2 will be a reality.
- f. The scene that will take place is graphically described in Matt. 25;
- g. Paul reiterates the certainty of judgment in Rom. 14:11-12.

IV. THE AFTER DEATH APPEARANCE OF THE CHRIST.

- a. He has promised that HE will come again. Acts 1:11
- b. Just before his trial Jesus promised that HE would come again. John 14:3; cf. Matt. 26:27; I Thess. 1:10 + 4:16.
- c. When he comes again, he will have no part in man's salvation from sin. He did that on his first journey through "this place of death."

- d. His coming next time will be with heaven's glory. Matt. 25:31.
- e. On his next trip, he will be welcomed by those who loved him. Phil. 3:20-21.
- f. He will catch us up to be with him forever. I Thess. 4:16-17.

CONCLUSION:

The "foretaste divine" about which the saints have sung down through the centuries will become then, a reality.

"Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine,
 Oh what a foretaste of glory divine,
 Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
 Born of His spirit, washed in His blood."

That victory song, that will be sung by men after their first death, must begin on this earth. He is our Saviour now, but He will be our judge then.

A brave young Scotchman, at the risk of his life saved a man from a precarious position on a high mountain cliff. The news got out and his name was spread on the news papers. Everyone was speaking of the man who was lost and of the brave man who found him and saved his life.

Years went by and the brave Scotchman became a fine lawyer and finally had a judgeship bestowed on him. This is a high honor in Scotland.

Into his court one day came a man to be tried for murder. The court proceeded in order, endeavoring to bring a just sentence. Each lawyer had done his best and the jury had been instructed. The court waited in suspense, until the verdict was finally returned. The judge read, with a steady and firm voice, "Guilty, and he is to be hanged."

Then the man on trial arose to his feet and addressed the Judge. "You do not remember me judge, but my name is Brotsh, and I am the man you saved from the craggs many years ago. You would not condemn a man you saved would you, judge? I plead mercy, your honorable judgeship."

There was a brief silence and then the judge looked into the face of the man whom he had once risked his life to save, and said, "Then I was your saviour; now I am your judge! The sentence is guilty."

Oh friend, Jesus on his first visit to earth was our Saviour, but when we meet him again, he will be our judge. Make your calling sure.

SACRIFICE, REPETITION VS. SACRIFICE, ONCE FOR ALL

Hebrews 10:1-18

INTRODUCTION:

This in actuality, is the conclusion of the argument which the apostle has been carrying on all through the preceding three chapters. The objective of God has always been to bring men unto perfection. He recognizes our imperfections in our whole beings; physical, intellectual and spiritual. The law of sacrifices was given to help men to improve from the condition in which sin had devolved them; however the law was not perfect, but it did suffice for a time to lead unto perfection which should afterward be revealed. The sacrifices had no power over the hearts of men. The old sacrifices did not cleanse the conscience of sin. The sacrifices left men to battle out their own insufficiencies with nothing but their own strength to depend on. In consequence of this, God made it compulsory that the sacrifices be made continually, to remind men of their sins, and their need of perfection.

PROPOSITION: *Why animal sacrifices were inadequate and why Jesus' sacrifice was sufficient for all time.*

I. WHY ANIMAL SACRIFICES WERE INADEQUATE.

1. The "blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a helper sprinkling them that have been defiled" could not cleanse "our conscience from dead works to serve the living God." V. 5: "Lamb of God—John 1:29."
 - a. They were typical sacrifices pointing ahead to the one who was to come who could do the perfect work! Heb. 2:10.
 - b. The sacrifices did not adequately picture the great and perfect sacrifice. Heb. 10:1. They were a dim shadow. All of the old dispensational paraphernalia were at best, poor pictures; the tabernacle, the priest and victim for sacrifice, all prefiguring future blessings to be found only in Christ. Witness the priest dragging the rebellious animal to the altar, vs. Christ, who offered up Himself willingly.
2. They availed nothing relative to removal of sins.
 - a. Therefore they had to be often repeated. 10:1-2. "Offered continually."
 - b. Because "the blood of bulls and goats" could not take away sin. V4.

- c. A brute suffering could never depice Spiritual suffering such as Jesus experienced; they did not adequately show forth the hatred of God for sin, nor His love for the sinner.
- d. The repetition of the sacrifices showed the participants that God was not satisfied with the sacrifices; and it was to make an impression on the people of the accumulation of their unforgiven sins.

II. NOW, BY CONTRAST LET US LOOK AT THE "ONCE FOR ALL" SACRIFICE.

1. Christ's true sacrifice satisfies God's demand for obedience. Vss. 5-9.
 - a. His blood is the symbol of his perfect obedience; our only hope.
 - b. He was "obedient unto death." Phil. 2:8.
 - c. This has nullified every Levitical offering. Now ONLY the blood of Christ, can cleanse from sin, and then we present our bodies as "living sacrifices holy and acceptable unto God," through the ONE sacrifice.
2. Christ's one sacrifice has removed all guilt. 10:10-14.
 - a. We have been sanctified; made holy. V 10. (Pure.)
 - b. Our high priest has "sat down at the right hand of God" where the Levites are represented as always standing in their official work. It was never finished. Jesus said, "It is finished." There has been "Perfect satisfaction" made.
 - c. He has "Perfected a people forever." 10:12
 - d. "Where remission of these is, there is no more a sin offering." Heb. 10:18.
3. Christ's ONE sacrifice takes away even the memory of sin. 15-18.
 - a. Jeremiah who lived some 700 years before Christ had prophesied this. Jere. 31:34.
 - b. Instead of remembering their sins on the day of Atonement, they were to be "Remembered no more," forever.
 - c. When the anti-type comes, the type is done away; the two do not exist side by side; or contemporaneously.
 - d. God, now has "Blotted them out;" "Rolled them up, like a scroll;" "Cast them behind His back;" "Put them into the depths of the sea," " removed them as far as the east is from the west."

Christ's ONE sacrifice has done what the millions of sacrifices of the old dispensation could not do; He makes the sinner, under His blood as if he had never sinned at all. Sins obliterated speaks out for the ONE perfect sacrifice of our Lord. Without that sacrifice, every man is condemned before the Lord God, who made the plan and perfected it in Christ.

CONCLUSION:

There is in the Alps a pass named "The terrible pass." The traveller moves to its very brink, unexpectedly. He is led by one guide and trailed by another. When they come to this treacherous pass, the first guide reaches up to a projecting ledge and by years of agility, he swings himself safely over to the ledge beyond. Immediately he turns to the man he has left behind, he kneels on the edge of the abyss and extends his arm, saying, "Place your foot there, and trust my arm to bring you over safely." Urged on by the guide behind, and pulled ahead by the one in front, the pass is done and in a moment the traveller stands on the solid path, leading into a sweet and smiling landscape among the mountains "Peace reposing on the bosom of strength." The "Terrible Pass" is past. It is the ONLY means of gaining the valley beyond.

So it is with entering the presence of God. There is only ONE PASS, the Sacrifice of the Son of God, and He is also our ONLY guide.

WHY THE DOOM OF THE APOSTATE?

Hebrews 10:26-31

INTRODUCTION:

It is difficult to define "Wilful sin." John declares that there is a sin unto death (I John 5:16) and that is final for Bible believing people. It is a fact that in all sin the will is involved, but an apostate is one who calmly, deliberately and coldly decides to abandon Christianity; give up the Christ sent of God. Few men do this, but there must have been danger, otherwise warning would not have been given. This is a fitting climax to the long argument made in Romans, Galatians and Hebrews. The Hebrew who accepted the Messiah and then turned from Him, was left without ANY hope and without God in the world. They all knew what happened to a man who despised the law of Moses; he died without mercy. A much worse fate awaits the man who leaves the Lord Jesus and plunges into sin again.

PROPOSITION: *Why the doom of the apostate?*

I. HE IS DOOMED BECAUSE OF HIS AWFUL GUILT.

1. Generally speaking his sin is described in V 26.
 - a. Apostasy does not refer to any one specific sin; an isolated act, no matter how awful it may be in the eyes of men.
 - b. Apostasy is the specific sin of **ABANDONING CHRIST AS A FAKE AND TURNING FROM HIM FOREVER!**
 - c. This is not referring to heathens who have never heard the Word of God, but those who have found salvation in Christ, at one time and then deliberately turned from Him; refusing Him.
 - d. Only a saved person can become an Apostate.
2. More specifically, the apostate sins against the three persons of the God-head, who have worked together to bring salvation.
 - a. He has sinned against God in that he has "Trodden under foot the son of GOD." The God who made the plan of salvation and loved lost men and women enough to sacrifice His son for them.
 - b. He has sinned against the Atoning Jesus in that he counts His blood as unholy. Christ's blood must be accepted or rejected in our hearts or trampled on. The apostate consistently despises the blood of the new covenant. He treats Christ as though he were another **THIEF** on the cross; his blood of no value to save him.
 - c. He has sinned against the Holy Spirit in that he "hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace." The Holy Spirit begat the Son of God; revealed the message of salvation and caused the writers to make for us an inspired message. An obstinate and wicked despising of the Holy Spirit; showing disrespect for Him, shows one is worthy of God's punishment. Jesus connects this rejection of the Holy Spirit with the **UNpardonable sin**. Matt. 12:31-32.

II. HE IS DOOMED BECAUSE HE IS AN APOSTATE:

- Not an ordinary doom that awaits them; their sin is greater; their judgment more awful.
1. Different from all other people, "there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sin." Salvation is free to all others.
 - a. The Jews had received of God the sacrifices in type; they gave them up and turned to the Lord who was proven

to them by prophecy to be the Saviour of the world. Now they rejected Him and God has no other means of salvation for any man.

- b. They were under the doom of their own sins, as any other sinner is, but on top of that guilt they had rejected the only means of salvation that God would accept; hopeless.
2. Because of this they will suffer a worse punishment than mere death, which the law of Moses meted out.
 - a. Their's is a constant enmity to God, while on His earth; conscience stung by sinning against even their God. They look forward to a terrible eternity; spiritual loss and separation from God forever.

III. WHAT GOD HAS SAID ABOUT THE APOSTATE'S DOOM!

1. Threatened judgment, with the possibility of going free, is bad enough, but with the absolute certainty that judgment is coming and that, from an angry God of vengeance, would be unbearable.
 - a. He made the universe and he will judge every creature in it.
 - b. His moral nature has taught and instilled into man the knowledge that there is retributive justice. (Adam hid when he sinned).
 - c. These Jews had 1500 years of God's actions in history, and they knew he had punished the enemies of his people to establish his word and justice.
 - d. Retribution is a doctrine of God in both testaments. Isa. 59:18 and Matt. 10:14-15.
2. Carnal men are always seeking the things of this life and in their pursuit there is the terrible temptation to live for the flesh, denying the Spirit, and that places one on the "dirt shoot" of apostasy, headed for eternal hell.
3. Human philosophies about us, tempt us to place a wrong interpretation upon the very heart of Christianity. Rom. 7:24-25.
 - a. We are not offered a life of ease in Christ, but power to overcome the adversary in the conflict, to God's glory.
4. Business and pleasure both tend to cause us to "put far off the DAY of the Lord" and forget his retributive justice. (Rich man in Luke 16:)

- a. "Jehovah's witnesses" who try to remove the punishment for sin in an eternal sleep or annihilation, do a great injustice to the God who has spoken here. V. 30-31.

Doctor Dodd in early life associated with such great men as Horn and Jones of Nayland, other fine religious leaders. But with the passing of the years he became enamored with the world, popular favor and making of a fortune. He became a "Demas" that forsook God and His son. He left God out of his life more and more, and while trying to defraud a wealthy friend he was arrested, convicted and executed. No mercy in man's court; how much less in God's, pure justice!

GOD'S PEROGATIVE, AND OUR CHOICE

Hebrews 10:30-31 plus I Peter 4:17

INTRODUCTION:

Vengeance is in the hands of the Lord, and no matter what the "No-Hellers" have to say, He is a God of vengeance; "Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense." Denial of this fact does not change it. He is a faithful pay master, and will bring every person to a full settlement at the last. If we are not right, it is a fearful thing to fall into His hands. Mercy calls and judgment threatens, and it is up to us to make our choice.

David faced somewhat the same situation in I Chron. 21: He had, in his vanity and desire to show off, numbered the people and that against good advice in the matter. God sent word to him that he would give him a choice from three punishments presented to him. David made just one request, that he might "Not fall into the hand of man." David felt he would, in his heart's condition of repentance, be treated far better in the hands of God than of his enemies. The penitent can trust God to do what is more merciful than man would exact.

In our text emphasis is laid upon "the hands of the LIVING GOD." He is "Self-existent;" His existence is independent of all other influences; eternal and absolute. His hands surely have almighty power, and if He be angry with us, how terrible to fall into His hands. Man's power and anger are both limited, while God is limited in neither scope.

PROPOSITION: *Note the contrast between a righteous man and a wicked one falling into the hands of God.*

I. NOTE THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY COME INTO THE HANDS OF GOD.

1. One, the righteous, comes voluntarily, deliberately and freely asking to fall into the hands of God. I Chron. 21:13. He chose this fate preferable to man's punishment. He knew God from past experience would deal more justly with him than his heathen enemies would. He knew, God knew his heart and would be merciful.
2. The wilfully, deliberately sinful, whether he likes it or not, will fall into the hands of an angry God. He is a guilty and unrepentant sinner coming before the hands of unswerving justice. Far stronger is the hand of God than any law officer's; FBI included. Some men evade the law of man, but there is no escape from God.

We must choose the manner of our coming into the hand of God.

II. NOTE THE CONDITION OF THESE TWO WHO FALL INTO GOD'S HANDS.

1. No one could be more penitent than David as expressed in I Chron. 21:8-17. God is the one who knows our hearts; HE looks on them.
2. In our text the apostate, who has continued in vile sins and that knowingly in the face of light, comes to judgment. He would not repent, but has gone on in stubborn rebellion until he is arrested as an outlaw rebel.
 - a. He knew he deserved God's wrath and no mercy, therefore it is stated, "It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

We are choosing daily, how we will meet Him. We are responsible for the condition of our hearts. We can repent or we can impudently continue in sin and receive the worst.

III. NOTE THE ANTICIPATION OF THE TWO GROUPS.

1. David looked to His mercies. I Chron. 21:13. He was a penitent man and he knew the mercies of God on such, even in strong judgments.
2. According to Heb. 10:27 these wicked apostates would fall into the hands of God in positive terror. The condition of men's hearts will determine to a great extent how they will be received into the hands of God. He is merciful to the penitent, but deals in terrible justice with the stubbornly rebellious apostate. We must make our decision as to how

we will be treated when we fall into His hands, because none will avoid this experience.

IV. THE OUTCOME OF THE TWO GROUPS WE ARE STUDYING.

1. David's people were punished. They were to him, like a family. He loved them. They were punished as a father punishes, to help them. They were to suffer physically for a little while; but in finality they were to be lifted up again and blest of heaven.
2. But the apostle pictures this group of persistent, sinners against light, being punished in a very different way. cf. Heb. 10:26-27 and 10:29-31.
 - a. Rev. 9:1-2 speaks of their punishment as a **BOTTOM-LESS PIT**. There is no end to it and it is filled with smoke.
 - b. It is going to be the wine of the wrath of God, poured out with no mixtures to weaken it, and it will last forever, day and night; no let up. Rev. 14:10.
 - c. The companionship of the pit forever will be the devil, the false prophet, and the beast, for those who deliberately continue in their heart breaking apostasy. Rev. 20:10.

CONCLUSION:

We are in the valley of decision now. We are choosing our everlasting condition before God then. We will meet him as penitent sinners expecting mercy, or rebellious sinners knowing that we will receive terrible punishment, then. We will fall into his hand humbly trusting him, or screaming with terror at our eternal prospects. We must choose **HOW** it will be with us at the judgment and forever.

We may not be apostates, stubborn rebellious sinners determinedly breaking God's laws, but we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We are all under the death sentence except for the Grace of God extended to us in the Saviour Jesus Christ. How quickly and firmly should we flee to Him for salvation from our just penalty, while the mercy of God is extended.

We should all be like the little girl aboard a sinking ship. Life boats were lowered and they had made several trips to the rescue ship. The ship was getting lower and lower in the rolling seas. Finally, the little girl decided she had waited long enough, and standing up on the rail she jumped into the sea, screaming "SAVE ME NEXT." That should be our attitude toward God's proffered salvation, today.

LOOKING BACK, IN ORDER TO LOOK AHEAD!

Hebrews 10:32-39

INTRODUCTION:

These Hebrew converts had, at the first, given up almost everything for the cause of Christ. They had forsaken their former religion, their home-land and friends. Enlightened, here refers to conversion; I like the expression. They endured great affliction, persecution, stoning, prison and death, in many instances. They suffered in seeing those they loved having to suffer also. It cost something then, to be a Christian! They abandoned all fleshly appetites and desires and faced prisons and open graves for Christ. We lay great emphasis upon Apostolic Christianity, let us lay more emphasis upon *apostolic zeal* and *self denial* in these days of self indulgence and foolish entertainment.

PROPOSITION: *How looking back helped them face the future.*

I. PAUL RECALLS SOME OF THE THINGS IN THE PAST, FOR THEM TO CONSIDER.

1. The various difficulties through which they had passed. V 32-34.
 - a. Great conflict of sufferings.
 - b. Being made a gazing stock both by reproaches and afflictions.
 - c. Suffering with those who were so abused.
 - d. Visited those in jail for their faith, possibly to expose themselves by it to more persecutions!
 - e. Lost their possessions joyfully, looking to a better reward.
2. All of this was based upon the fact that they believed that Jesus was their long expected Messiah and Saviour unto eternal life. They had received the gift of the Holy Spirit. They had given up all trust in Judaism.
3. They had accepted and accomplished all of the will of God, as much of it as had been made known to them. V 36. They had been willing to do anything more, if it be made known to them. It had made them victors.

Paul asks them to recall the things of the past, through which they had past so gloriously, that they might be challenged to accept the message he was about to deliver to them for their steadfastness in the future.

II. THERE PROBLEMS OF THE PRESENT WOULD BE MET VICTORIOUSLY OR IN DEFEAT, LARGELY DEPENDING UPON THE GENUINENESS OF THEIR PAST.

1. The past was not enough; there was the present witness that needed to be kept up. The time of waiting is a trying time!
 - a. The place they occupied among persecutors, and spoilers of all their worldly possessions, must have been a trial.
 - b. They were waiting to be relieved. They realized that possibly no relief would come until their King should return for them. This would be, at His second coming, "In the fulness of time."
 - c. They must learn to trust God, and wait, knowing He will deal justly with all men. Others waited for us; now we wait for them.
 - d. Their waiting, was not *merely* waiting, because there was an element of hope in it. V 35-36. Hope certainly gives endurance to our apparent endless waiting. If our hope is a secure hope, there is joy in our very inmost being, as we wait!

III. UPON THEIR FAITHFULNESS IN THE PAST AND PRESENT WOULD DEPEND THEIR PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE.

1. Their future was based upon the promises of God and nothing could be more certain of fulfillment. Therefore Paul exhorted them not to cast away their confidence. (Rom. 8:35-39).
2. In reality, they could find no compensation in the earth for what they had suffered, and were suffering. Rom. 8:18.
3. Reward is promised to those who are faithful; patiently faithful. The promise lies at the end of a faithful life, whether it be long or short, is of little matter, in comparison with eternity.
4. The contest may be fierce and the battle a long one, but there is victory assured by the eternal God, to the ones who are faithful unto the end. In a little while the earth with its troubles will be swallowed up in the joys of heaven. God help us to keep in our mind's eye the goal, our eternal reward, through Christ who has gone to prepare a place for us.

Our reward is worth all the striving we are called on to do, to be crowned with victory at last. II Time. 4:8; Col. 1:5; I Peter 1:4; Matt. 25:34-40; Rev. 2:10; 3:11; I Cor. 9:25-27. and James 1:12.

Paul concludes his appeal in Vss 38-39. The just, that is, the Christian, lives by faith—faith in God, faith in His promises; faith that there is a far better time to come. Godly faith looks onward, upward and forward, while unbelief looks within, backward and downward. Paul's heart was set on those whom he had led to Christ in the first place, reaching heaven. Even the thought of their missing out on the grand prize at the end of the race, causes him to say "My soul hath no pleasure in him" that is in him who "shrinks back unto perdition."

CONCLUSION:

James Renwick, of a much later period in history, who was martyred at the age of twenty six, in Scotland; before his execution, exclaimed, "O Lord, thou hast brought me within two hours of eternity; and this is no matter of terror to me more than if I were to lie down on a bed of roses; nay, through grace, to thy praise I may say, I never had the fear of death since I came to this prison; but from the place whence I was taken I could have gone very composedly to the scaffold. O, how can I contain this, to be within two hours of the CROWN OF LIFE AND GLORY?"

When he heard the drums beating for the guards to turn out, he exclaimed, "Yonder is the welcome warning to my marriage feast: the bridegroom cometh; I am ready, I am ready."

This was what Paul desired of these early Hebrew Christians, and this is what Jesus wants of every "Born again," son of His, that "They might have faith unto the saving of the soul."

That faith has sustained us in the past, it sustains us now, and it will sustain us in the hour of our transition.

FAITH AND WHAT IT DOES THROUGH MEN

Hebrews Chapter 11

INTRODUCTION:

After having argued clearly, scripturally and conclusively that men cannot be justified or saved by the law, the apostle proceeds to show that faith has been the magic influence that has opened the door of salvation from the beginning on downward to their day.

A brief definition of faith is given. Faith takes hold of, gives substance to, a firm conviction, a full persuasion relative to things not seen, or are to come. Sight takes hold of temporal things; faith takes hold of spiritual things. Sight takes hold on things that vanish often like a cloud; faith takes hold on that which is en-

during, yea everlasting. Sight gratifies our passing fancies; faith is a spring of perpetual joy. Briefly stated, faith is taking God at his word.

PROPOSITION: *What faith has done for others, and what it can do for us.*

I. WHAT FAITH DID FOR THE ELDERS.

1. This, I understand to mean the Elders who were valiant men yet are not mentioned in this catalog of notables in this chapter.
 - a. Adam had faith in God, when he named all the animals in the garden. Gen. 2:19.
 - b. Adam had faith when he had children born to him. Gen. 1:28 and 4:1.
 - c. Adam acted in faith, when he left the garden at God's command. Gen. 3:23.

Faith is taking God at his word; Adam did just that in several instances as recorded in Genesis.

II. WHAT FAITH DOES FOR US MATERIALLY.

1. When others doubt, we believe God spoke this old world into existence, with all of its glories.
 - a. In contradistinction to Atheistic, or theistic, organic or inorganic evolution, we believe God created it.
2. By faith we believe God made a universe so great that we are unable to see to it's extremity, nor probe it's minuteness.
3. By faith we believe He controls it from the smallest form of energy to the great flood tides of the oceans the world around.
4. By faith we believe there was a time when there was nothing, and our God spoke, and where there was nothing, there came into being something!

While others theorize and philosophize, draw numerous hypothesis, postulates and assumptions, we have it settled in our hearts that God is the source and Lord of the entire creation, from the time of its coming into being, and until He sees fit to burn it up. It is a settled fact to us and it gives peace and solidarity.

III. WHAT FAITH DOES FOR US PERSONALLY.

1. Our characters are made on "the things which are not seen;" but "hoped for."
 - a. The invisible engages our attention and holds it. Mathematics and sciences deal with the intangible.

- b. The metaphysical calls forth energies above the physical.
 - c. Love is an unseen thing, but it changes our lives.
 - d. Desire is invisible, but it changes a man from a bum to an industrious citizen.
2. Character is built upon testimony so strong it builds confidence and immovable convictions.
- a. The evidence was given by God to the "elders" of hundreds and thousands of years before the Messiah was to come; and upon that faith they built the character that we admire today.
 - b. Testimony built in them a genuine faith that made character which was vigorous, heroic, brace and courageous, and which stood the test, although it was incomplete; imperfectly developed, it was victorious.
 - c. Faith, in every age and dispensation has caused men and women to put their trust in the Lord, based upon the bare words of God.
 - d. The excellency of character which the apostle is about to delineate was built upon the power of their faith, in every instance.
 - e. These names have become house-hold images to our minds, living from the Patriarchal times on down to the latter day prophets and that, all because of the character which faith built.

CONCLUSION:

Let me emphasize this important fact; It is not faith in the hearts of men, but faith reaching out into their conduct, that is important in God's index book. The work must begin in the heart, and then it will be easy to act it out. If we set our hearts on the will of God, our lives inevitably will show it. This long list of immortals in this chapter placed their emblazoned names there by living and walking by faith, based upon God's incomplete revelation to them.

A young man was being instructed by a preacher, relative to his salvation by Christ given by heaven's grace. The young man suddenly turned to the preacher and said, "I will never believe until I have an experience." The preacher replied, "do you believe the Bible?" "Yes" came the unhesitating reply. "Then," said the preacher, "listen to this," and he read him Acts 8:36-39, where the eunuch asked if he could be baptized. The preacher said, "If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest. And he commanded the

chariot to stand still and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him . . . the eunuch saw him no more but HE WENT ON HIS WAY REJOICING." In the Bible the experience of joy indescribable came after the man who had faith acted upon that faith in baptism.

Will you believe God today? Will you show that faith by obeying the God who commanded it? Then you can have your name added to the catalog of the men of Faith.

THREE GIANTS OF FAITH WHO PRECEDED THE FLOOD

Hebrews 11:4-7

INTRODUCTION:

No matter what age man has lived in, he has never been able to please God, without faith. Faith in God has been rewarded and well pleasing to God in EVERY age; Patriarchal, Mosaic or Christian. This forever excludes the Moralists. God requires more of us than simple justice and charity. If we would serve God, we must believe that He is, without any doubt. We must seek Him diligently and believe that rewards are in His hands. Each of these great Patriarchs illustrate the faith that God always demands.

PROPOSITION: *Faith of three men in the "Star-light age."*

I. ABEL. We have just one incident referred to in his whole life but it teaches us, to this day, God's lesson.

1. In what did the excellence of his sacrifice consist?
 - a. It was not because he chose to give a more valuable sacrifice to God. The price of meat and vegetables can be the same.
 - b. We have no record that he chose a better quality of sacrifice than Cain. Both could have been excellent, and yet one refused.
 - c. One offered an animal sacrifice; the other garden products.
 - d. Abel's sacrifice was regarded by God as better because he offered it according to God's demands for the occasion. Faith is according to testimony, therefore Abel knew what God had requested, and he simply obeyed God. God accepted it. Gen. 4:4-12.
2. How lasting has his "Faith sacrifice," been?
 - a. Man hated him for his obedience and made him the first

martyr. Gen. 4:8 and I John 3:12 tells us why Cain killed him.

- b. Abel speaks to the whole Bible reading world, Heb. 11:4; and Jesus refers to him as "Righteous Abel." Matt. 23:35

II. ENOCH.

1. The grand finale of these two men's lives illustrate the difference in God's earthly rewards to His servants: It is seen again in Isaiah who was sawn asunder, while Elijah went up in a whirlwind.
 - a. Enoch's demise was so different from the long list of "he dieds." His transfer of title was unique in the annals of men. He walked with God, and at the close of the day he was closer to heaven than earth, so God took him home with Him.
 - b. The reason is given for his being translated; his faith. He lived a life of sanctification; separation; holiness. He beat MARY to the assumption by thousands of years.
 - c. What a high standard he set for all ensuing ages to strive for.
2. Holiness always springs from faith within.
 - a. Enoch had no means of communing with Jehovah except as he kept the law of a blood sacrifice.
 - b. This he must have done, in order to be well pleasing to God. His sacrifices were not as Israel's were in Isaiah's day. Isa. 1:10-15, but from a heart of faith and a life of faithfulness.
 - c. He lived in the midst of sinners, just as we do now, and by his faith, he was a light in their darkness.
 - d. He believed in the God who makes himself known only by revelation; He is not seen.
 - e. Enoch had meager knowledge of God's character, but what he did know, he practiced, and trusted in God to reward him. He found that God did not let him down, but took him to be with Him without seeing death.

III. NOAH.

1. Noah's faith, too, was in his heart first. He believed and feared, and God spoke to him.
 - a. At first God did not go into particulars, but simply declared what He intended to do.

- b. Noah did not ask for particulars, but proceeded to obey, because he was moved by a Godly fear. Faith, fear and love is a trinity that has played an important part in man's redemption.
- c. Noah had faith; feared, loved and obeyed, and salvation followed.
- d. He did not try to save himself by faith ALONE, but he took God at His word, labored years in preparing the ark to save both himself and his family.
- e. By faith he exhibited what we know him to be now; an heir of righteousness and that by faith, faith that obeyed.
- f. No doubt he was severely tried by the thoughtless of his day, but his faith triumphed and victory came at last.
 Faith in Abel made his worship acceptable.
 Faith in Enoch made him so Godly, God took him.
 Faith in Noah kept him from living like the world about

CONCLUSION:

him, and in finality kept him from going to the same place they were headed. It was faith that saved all three, and it is faith that will save every person today. Not "faith alone" but faith enough to take God at His word and obey Him.

Faith is like the coupling which attaches the cars to the engine. All the power, speed and tremendous momentum that belongs to the locomotive now become transmitted to the cars. The coupling is simply the medium of communicating that power. So faith joins the believer to Christ, and makes him partaker of all that Christ has, and is, and does. He said, "We that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." It all begins in faith, taking God at His word.

FATHER OF THE FAITHFUL

Hebrews 11:8-19 and Galatians 3:7

INTRODUCTION:

The account of his faithfulness is referred to briefly here in Hebrews, but in Gal. 3:7 it is specifically stated that "they that are of faith are sons of Abraham." The account of these two notables, Abraham and Sarah, is a spring of perpetual delight. By faith "Abraham obeyed God." His was an active faith. He did not stay at home by faith, when God told him to depart; he departed by faith. He illustrates prompt obedience many times.

When one reads Abraham's life, he is tempted to say nothing is impossible to the man of faith. They "judged him faithful who had promised" and I am sure if we would do the same thing we would be victorious, too.

PROPOSITION: *Note the many instances in which Abraham's faith is shown.*

I. ABRAHAM'S FAITH IS SHOWN IN HIS BEING WILLING TO LEAVE HIS NATIVE COUNTRY AND GO INTO A STRANGE LAND TO MAKE HIS HOME.

1. Remembering the difficult means of travel they had in those days, this command to leave his homeland, which was one of the wealthiest in the world then, would be a difficult decision to make.
 - a. The old home has sacred memories, and many friendships.
 - b. Livestock having to be herded over the many miles would be an excellent excuse not to move.
2. He knew nothing of the land into which God would guide him.
 - a. The desert, with all of its hardships, lay between him and his destination.
3. He knew nothing of the great plan of God wrapped up in these changing countries. True he had a promise, but it was so vague.
 - a. Without knowing all about it, he took God at His word and began getting ready to move out on the promises of God.
 - b. He believed he would be guided by the same God who called him.
 - c. This was Abraham's first recorded act of faith that laid the pattern of a life that was to be lived by faith, unto death.

II. HIS FAITH WAS SHOWN IN HIS BEING WILLING TO HAVE NO HOME, BUT CONSTANTLY MOVING FROM PLACE TO PLACE.

1. When he arrived in this strange land, there was no deed in the bank waiting for him; no title mortgage security.
 - a. He became a wanderer in the land his descendants were to possess.

- b. He became a wandering herdsman, living in tents, with no permanent dwelling place.
 - c. He had come from a land of stone houses, but he never built one, not even for a fort to protect his wealth.
2. He owned only one spot of land, his private cemetery.
 3. His knowledge of the covenant that was to be fulfilled in the coming Messiah, developed gradually through the years, and then in his descendants; yet he trusted God.
 4. Apparently, they viewed Canaan as a sort of heaven; "Confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims" on this earth. He became one of the wealthiest of men, but he continued to wander and hope.
 - a. He "hoped for a city whose maker and builder was God." In this faith, he continued a life of faithful obedience to God.

III. ABRAHAM'S FAITH IS SEEN AS HE WAITED FOR MANY YEARS FOR THE PROMISED SON AND HEIR.

1. This was one trial through which both Abraham and Sarah passed.
 - a. Humanly speaking, the time came when it was a physical impossibility for them to have any child at all: still they believed God.
 - b. This faith became the sole basis for the birth of Isaac.
 - c. Through their faith they realized the promise that brought them a physical heir and the Spiritual hope of the world.
 - d. God surely knew his man when He called Abraham; his life has proven him worthy of trust and to be called Father of the Faithful.

IV. THE SACRIFICING OF HIS SON WAS ABRAHAM'S GREATEST DISPLAY OF FAITH.

1. The love of a father for his son; his only begotten son would be tremendously strained by this unnatural request made upon Abraham, by his God.
 - a. Not even a patriarch would expect such a demand.
 - b. It surely was against the most sacred human affections.
 - c. It appeared to be the undoing of a lifetime of waiting, and the destruction of the heir for the world's salvation; he who was to bless all nations.

2. Abraham's faith was proven absolute; he did not fail God.
 - a. In his own heart he had surrendered his only son, as he had him bound and ready to slay on the altar.
 - b. He was sustained in this hour by believing God could raise him from the dead, if it was His will that Isaac be the "Sacrifice for all the world's sin."
 - c. He believed God would keep His promise somehow. He did not know *how*, but he did know God.
 - d. After seeing his wife conceive at her age, a resurrection from the dead would be no greater miracle. He trusted God to acquire Isaac, why not continue to trust God to keep Isaac?
 - e. Figuratively speaking, v. 19 says he did receive him from the dead.

CONCLUSION:

Certainly this test entitles Abraham to be referred to forever as the Father of the Faithful. He had a faith in his heart that motivated his entire life. And that is a saving faith.

Abraham was built up to this final testing time by the experiences he had had previously. It is much like a ship coming into dock. The big ships hausers are too large for any sailor to throw ashore, so the sailor takes a small line, ties it to the hauser, and with a weight on the small line throws it ashore, and the men on the dock draw the heavy hauser to the great "Nigger-heads" on the dock. The big ship's hausers are too large for any sailor to throw line that brings all those saved to safety.

THREE DIFFERENT TYPES OF FAITH

Hebrews 11:20-22

INTRODUCTION:

True, there is only one faith, but it has varying uses in the different lives of its advocates. It never wears the same coat; its appearance is so deceiving at times. Every man who has this grace is certain there are glories laid up for him, if he perseveres in his duties; just as certain as if they were having his reception in heaven today. Godly faith expands the intellect while it purifies the heart; it multiplies the aims and objects of our understanding, while it fixes and simplifies our desires and passions. Faith is founded upon adequate evidence, or else it is mere superstition. These three *Greats* had faith.

Jacob - 12 sons (Joseph)
 Jacob - 12 sons (Joseph)
 Jacob - 12 sons (Joseph)

PROPOSITION: *Let us see how their faith worked to place them in this catalog of the faithful of all ages.*

I. ISAAC.

1. The apostle intimates that this blessing was the result of a divine impulse; not merely human circumstances.
 - a. Before these children were born, God had determined to make the younger, the one to be the leader in religious fields. Gen. 25:21-23.
 - b. When Jacob came disguised, Isaac felt moved to give him the blessing. Gen. 27:27-29.
 - c. When the blessing was given, and Esau exposed the fraud, Isaac did not feel led to reverse his blessing or decision. Gen. 27:35-38 and Heb. 12:17.
 - d. We do not know why God deals as He does; nor why men behave themselves as they do at times, but as we look back upon the two sons, we can see the wisdom of the omniscient God in choosing Jacob instead of Esau, and that, before they were born. We have God's Word that Isaac blessed Jacob above Esau, with respect to things to come. How little, except by faith, did Isaac know about the future, yet he trusted and obeyed God!

II. JACOB, WHEN HE WAS DYING, BLESSED HIS SON JOSEPH.

1. Jacob's faith was based upon Divine testimony. Gen. 48:5, 15-20.
 - a. By faith he predicted that Joseph should have a double portion, and that Ephraim, the younger, should have a larger heritage than his brother Manasseh.
 - b. Humanly speaking, one would think the grandfather would have urged upon his grandsons to inherit from their Egyptian Princess mother, but by faith it was different.
 - c. Although Jacob was in a foreign land by necessity, his faith was still in Jehovah who had willed the Land of Promise to his seed. He did not forget the family covenant in adverse circumstances!
 - d. By faith he believed he would return to Palestine, for before his death he made Joseph promise that they would *not bury him in Egypt*. He wasn't looking for an Egyptian embalming and interment in a foreigner's tomb. Gen. 47:29-31.

2. All this definitely shows that Jacob believed God and had faith that wandering Israel would return to their old homeland.
3. Jacob certainly buttresses our faith to look for a Land of Promise; even as he did. Oh, may God never allow our eyes to be blinded by the glories of Egypt, that we may see always beyond the terrestrial bondage, and view with the eye of faith the "Heavenly country" for which we long.

III. JOSEPH'S BLESSING.

1. Joseph proves himself to be a "Blueblood" in the family famous for its faith. Like Timothy he had Godly parents.
 - a. Being elevated to the place of "Secretary of State" did not turn his head one iota. He remembered the God who got him honor fresh from the jail. Gen. 41:9-40.
 - b. A foreign residence and honors never did change the heart of Joseph from being a *Hebrew*. Egypt offered earthly honors, but God offered eternal rewards.
 - c. Joseph was not deceived by the brilliant sparkle of Egypt.
2. With the eye of faith, Joseph looked beyond the day of blessings in this foreign land, and asked that his body be taken with them when they returned to Palestine, the Land of Promise. Gen. 50:24-26.
 - a. How this tradition was kept alive during the many intervening years until the captivity was broken is not told to us, but we know Israel did take the bones of Joseph with them on their return journey, to take their promised homeland by invasion.
 - b. Among the treasures that accompanied the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt, none was of more value to their faith, if they had discerned it, than the embalmed body of Joseph going home with his people. Surely he lived and died by faith.

CONCLUSION:

We need a faith like these men of God to carry us through the trials that face us. Every generation has its problems; ours is no exception! God is able to overcome the temptations and trials of every age. He is the unchanging God of eternity. Let us find our place in His program and live by faith that will overcome every obstacle. Faith even overcomes the Devil who seeks our damnation.

The man who goes fishing on the Lord's Day, absenting himself from the fellowship of the Saints around the table of the Lord, may try to find consolation in the Scripture which says "we are saved by faith!" But is he a believer? He is not! Faith takes in obedience. If the heart is not moved to obedience, then it is not a soul-saving faith that he possesses, but a soul-damning faith. "If ye love me ye will keep my commandments." Mark 16:15-16.

FAITH DETERMINES OUR CHOICE

Hebrews 11:24-26

INTRODUCTION:

Through the teaching of our Sunday Schools the story of Moses in the basket, has become known to millions of children. In the later years, Cecil B. DeMilles has produced "The Ten Commandments" twice; the second being labeled an "Extravaganza" even by Hollywood's standards, so almost every adult knows something about the man Moses. (Even though the usual took place in both of these instances, distortion and cutting and adding to the facts as related in the Scriptures.) Still Moses' life has been made accessible to millions. *Why?* Did you ever ask yourself that question? It was because he was such a giant of faith and action.

PROPOSITION: *What did Moses' decision involve as related to Faith?*

I. MOSES' FAITH INVOLVES THE FAITH OF HIS PARENTS.

1. Children owe considerable to their parents in every age.
 - a. Some are a joy, such as Isaac, Samuel, and John the Baptist.
2. Moses was begotten under a governmental "Ban." He was shielded from birth against the government and in favor of God-given natural love.
3. God honored that faith in allowing Pharaoh's daughter to find the crying child in the ark, and causing her to love him and take him as her own.
4. It was an act of faith that caused the sister to secure for him his own mother to nurse him.
5. From what we can learn from Moses' life, his mother taught him respecting the people of God's covenant and Jehovah God.

II. MOSES' FAITH INVOLVED A CHANGE OF LOYALTY WHEN HE WAS A GROWN MAN. cf. Acts 7:23.

1. He did not decide in kindergarten, too young to reason, nor in the confines of an old people's home, in semi-senility.
2. He decided when he was at the height of his mental vigor, and when he could not help but know the awful consequences of it.
3. His faith gave him strength to break away from his adopted mother and the life of ease among "Royalty" in the palace.
4. His mature faith and manner of life, which is usually very well crystalized at the age of forty, he gave up and completely changed the directives of his remaining life.

III. MOSES' FAITH INVOLVED SACRIFICES WHICH MOST OF US OVERLOOK IN HIS LIFE.

1. He held a celebrated and distinguished position in Pharaoh's household. He sacrificed a position that could have possibly made him heir to the throne of the greatest nation in existence.
2. He gave up the lusts of the flesh; "Pleasures of sin for a season."
 - a. Apparently his mother had taught him relative to sinful indulgences, and the brevity of their enjoyment.
 - b. He had a conscience, and that is a creature of education.
 - c. In the king's house there were more gratifications for sinful carnality than we in the Occident can imagine; he gave them up willingly, by faith.
3. This so-called sacrifice of the flesh, relieved him of having to look back upon a misspent life, later on.
4. Moses, by faith, turned away from the riches of Egypt, too. It is difficult for one who has lived in riches, to give them up and suffer poverty; even slavery, but Moses did that!
 - a. Man's age-old sin of covetousness, Moses shed completely.
 - b. He did this when that sin is at its height, at forty.

IV. HIS FAITH DECISION HAD LITTLE PROSPECTS EXCEPT THAT OF GREAT DISCOMFORTS. (He knew how the slaves were treated.)

1. He had seen the oppression, cruelty, overwork, hunger and abject poverty of the Hebrew slaves.
2. He had heard the reproaches the Egyptians heaped upon the "shepherders." (Egyptians hated cattle herdsmen.)
3. He knew the ridicule and reproach that would be his lot.

V. MOSES' FAITH WAS BUILT UPON GOD'S FUTURE REWARD. "He had respect unto the recompense of reward."

1. Mother's teaching concerning the covenant with this people, caused Moses to decide to cast his lot with them and inherit the promised blessing.
2. He believed that in Israel all the nations were to be blest.
3. Moses chose to do what was *right* before God, and take the consequences. (It always includes duties and difficulties.)

CONCLUSION:

Moses' decision stands out in the annals of men and is recorded to help us in our difficult decisions. He decided by his soul, not by his sensuous nature. Man has a higher nature and a lower; Moses' higher nature dominated his choice. He looked at life through the eyes of faith and saw more than the transitory materials about him. He had been taught the eternal laws of righteousness and the abiding qualities of truth and wisdom. As we look at the decisions of Moses from this great distance we can see that he brought reason and faith to work together and stamped his name among the immortals! We can do the same thing, or we can be like Esau and sell our souls for a mess of pottage. May I appeal to you, young and old, act today like you wish you had acted when eternity dawns and you stand naked before your God, to answer for the decisions you have made. Moses will be glad; how will it be with you?

In order to have faith, you must have faith in something. From the top of Mount Washburn, in the Yellowstone National Park, I saw an eagle holding himself on pinions, motionless, two thousand feet above the surface of the earth below. That eagle would have dropped like a rock if he had not trusted in his wings. Faith is not an indefinite thing, such as a mere longing feeling amidst vacancy. Faith is definitely grasping upon that which can bear you up amidst life's trials and carry you through the gates of Glory at the last. Faith in Christ takes him at his word. He says he is "The way, the truth and the life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by me." "He is able to save unto the uttermost." Trust Him, now!

SILENT MEN OF ACTION

Hebrews 11:32-38

INTRODUCTION:

The results of faith can not be estimated or measured. Under the old dispensation, the results were often of a physical character. By faith, the walls of Jericho fell down flat. By faith, Rahab the harlot escaped the destruction of the city. She certainly stands out in bold relief against the degeneracy and corruption of her times.

Now comes a list of men who stand out head and shoulders above their companions and most of the past generations, but little is said about them here. They were men of action and I have chosen to call them "Silent Men of Action."

PROPOSITION: *For what were these men noted?*

I. GIDEON. *5th Judge of Israel* *Ju Jg. 6:11*

1. With one stroke of the pen the apostle practically takes in all the good men who had lived before him.
2. Gideon leads the way with his faithful band of three hundred, blowing their trumpets, breaking pitchers, and lifting their lamps on high while they shouted, just what God had told them to shout, "The sword of the Lord and Gideon."
 - a. This certainly was an act of faith. No one had won a military victory in this manner before.
 - b. Their faith was honored. The Midianites were put to rout, and Gideon's name is emblazoned on the pages of the faithful men.

II. BARAK IN COMPANY WITH DEBORAH. *Ju Jg. 4:2-3*

1. He led ten thousand men of Israel from Naphtali and Zebulun against Sisera and Jabin's army, and God delivered them into his hands.
 - a. Barak had implicit faith in God's judge, who was a woman and he refused to go to battle unless she came along.
 - b. The price he paid for this dependence on a woman was Sisera who was killed by a woman.

III. SAMSON. *only 1378*

1. Samson did many mighty things when the power of God was on him.
 - a. Killed a lion barehanded.
 - b. Caught 300 foxes and used them for fire-brands.
 - c. Slew a thousand enemies of God with the jawbone of an ass.

- d. Carried off the gates of Gaza in the midst of the night.
- e. Killed more Philistines in his death than he had in all his life.

His life illustrates how young men get into bad company, lie to their parents, get bound to sin, made to grind for the devil, then they are blinded, and finally suicide. When Samson was right, he was mightily used of God; when he was wrong, he was mightily used of the Devil.

IV. JEPHTHA. *Judg 12:7*

- 1. He magnanimously led the children of Israel against their foes even after he had been insolently thrust out of his father's house.
 - a. He had faith in God and expected to come home from the war a victor, and made preparations to rule.
 - b. He spoke before God at Mizpah.
 - c. He reminded the Ammonites that God had given them victory over them before and He would do it again.
 - d. He gave glory to God for the land that was taken from the Ammonites, and God gave him victory again.

V. SAMUEL. *ISAIAH 11:20*

- 1. Samuel led the people out of the depths of corruption and by faith developed them into a nation of intelligent freemen.
 - a. He sat up a stone after one of his great victories and called it Ebenezer.
 - b. He said, "Hitherto the Lord hath been our helper."

VI. DAVID. *2 SAM 16:1*

- 1. Possibly there is more written about the personal life and actions of David, in the Old Testament, than there is about any other character.
- 2. David led armies of the Lord against His enemies often, and victory followed victory.
- 3. By faith David pushed his conquests from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates, and thus fulfilled the promise of God to Israel, relative to their borders.

CONCLUSION:

By faith Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel walked in the ways of God. By faith, Daniel escaped the lion's den unharmed. By faith, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego walked through the fire un-singed. By faith we grow from weakness to strength. By faith, men are inspired to stand out against every evil. By faith, women

of God received their dead back to life. Faith overcame in the life of myriads of people and sustained them through persecutions, torture, and affliction. They believed the promises of God. The greatest promise of God is the promise of securing our souls when the hour of death comes upon us. Salvation is assured by faith in Christ: faith enough to take him at his word and obey him implicitly. He is able to save!

If you had a letter sent to you, would you not open it? The other day a poor woman had a little money sent to her by a friend, in a letter. She was in real need and worried, so she went out to see her friend, the very friend who sent her the letter. When she asked for help, the lady said, "I sent you some help yesterday in a letter." "Oh, dear," said the poor afflicted woman, "that must have been the letter I put behind the looking glass."

God's letter has been sent to every sinner on earth. It is to be read and believed and profited by, but too many are putting it behind the mirror or hiding it somewhere else, instead of reading the message and believing it. Won't you hear God's Message to you, and by faith accept His wonderful salvation, now? Be associated with these Men of Faith, forever!

A GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES

Hebrews 12:1-2

INTRODUCTION:

Paul was a great reasoner, and he never fails to see and use every practical lesson. The great cloud of witnesses are the ones just named in the last of the eleventh chapter from Abel to David. They testify out of the abundant supply of their experiences that the promises of God are true. We have both their witness and the witness of the early Christians as they sealed their testimony with their blood.

The picture Paul has in mind is the old races where men ran for earthly prizes, while thousands of spectators gazed down upon them and applauded their efforts. In our race, God, angels and men look on. The track has been smoothed by the feet of millions who have run the course.

In the ancient races great preparations were made. For days they ran with weights on their feet and bodies, so when they stripped them off they would be light. Some stumbled and fell in the races; others fainted and gave up, and only *one* attained the coveted prize.

Paul appeals to every Christian to take off the weights that hold us back, and then run the race with patience. The amount of faith will largely determine the success we attain in the race.

PROPOSITION: *The cloud of witnesses and what they testified.*

I. THEY COMPOSED A *CLOUD*, A GREAT NUMBER OF WITNESSES.

1. Paul comparatively names only a few of the witnesses who are looking down upon us and watching us run the race.
 - a. They come from every Bible age.
 - b. Both sexes are given a place among them.
 - c. Representatives are there from cowboys to kings.
2. When we think of the great stadiums men have erected, and then compare them with the millions who have "gone on before," the so-called great crowds of today's sports fade into nothingness.
3. We have, not only "the saints of old," but we are surrounded by saints of today, who boost for us as we run the race.
4. This great crowd, "cloud of witnesses," is increasing day by day. Truly it is the "Innumerable host."

II. THEIR TESTIMONY IS ALL FOR ONE CAUSE.

1. The central figure of their testimony is the divine revelation of God that culminated in the Messiah.
 - a. All of their testimonies agree; there's no conflict.
2. The lives they had lived and were living were in many instances the exact opposite of the world; a life of faith.
 - a. They had hope as they observed the wicked going down to defeat.
 - b. They *knew* righteousness exalts a nation.
3. They believed God, and had no fear of man.
 - a. Great trials had come and they met them victoriously.
 - b. They had seen the ones who bedeviled them, die hopelessly.
4. The passing of the years had not dimmed their hopes, but only brightened it.

III. THEIR TESTIMONY WAS GIVEN WITHOUT ANY HOLLYWOOD FANFARE.

1. Mostly their lives were their testimony, lived without any conscious effort to show off.
 - a. One of their oldest men, Abel, still spoke faithfully from the pages of history.

- b. Many others died for their faith, and it cannot help but impress us as we watch them live and yield up their lives.
- c. Their lives present circumstantial evidence that cannot be denied by the smoothest infidel. Deeds are difficult to refute. They had "Let their lights shine."

IV. WHAT WAS THE HEART OF THEIR TESTIMONY?

1. While some of these men and women were successful in business and in the world, the central portion of their testimony was to God's faithfulness.
2. From Him they had received their life and strength to live different from the world, and they were not ashamed to say so.
3. Their testimony rang out where God's influence had touched their lives and blessed them.
 - a. Their testimony was "Praise God for all His benefits."
 - b. They praised God for what *He* was able to do through them; not for what they had done for Him.

V. WHAT SHOULD THEIR TESTIMONY TEACH US?

1. To whom much is given, much is required.
2. We have their testimony, so there is no possible evasion of our responsibility to live lives of faith.
3. This great lesson in Hebrews, the eleventh chapter, was given to give us abundant evidence upon which to base our faith, but if we do not avail ourselves of it, we will be held accountable at the judgment.
4. Just in my short lifetime, I could add many names to this list, and their great lives shame me. May God help us to look up and about us and see the "great cloud of witnesses" that is steadily increasing, and by His grace may we soon be added to their expanding numbers to cheer others on in the great fight of the faith.

CONCLUSION:

When the battle of Corili was being won by the impassioned vigor of Caius Marcius, they mourned to see their leader covered with wounds and bloody. They begged him to retire from the battlefield and go to camp, but with his characteristic bravery he exclaimed, "It is not for conquerors to be tired, nor to take it easy." He led them in the thickest battles and continued to stand on his feet and fight until the last enemy was driven from the field.

Such language might well become the Christian *Faith Warrior*. He is tempted to lie down and rest before the conquest is completed and the triumph thoroughly achieved. One look at the "great cloud of witnesses" should drive him on with Heavenly courage unto death. Amen.

GOD'S PROMISED DISCIPLINE

Hebrews 12:5-13

INTRODUCTION:

It is a race that we are in and its goal is Heaven. Along the way there are many pitfalls and trials. It is dangerous to run too rapidly and just as dangerous to run too slowly, this race; certainly, to sit down is fatal. We should strike a steady gait and keep it. This race provides a crown for every "Faithful Finisher" of the race, and this crown is not a fading crown of a few days' duration, but one eternal reward given by Jesus, the Captain of our salvation. He holds the riches of the world and heaven in his hands. He has run the race before us and, therefore, knows all the trials. He knows the joys of victory, too, so he can urge us on to a joyous conclusion.

PROPOSITION: *There is Christian discipline for every entrant.*

I. WHAT ARE THE DISTINCTIVE QUALITIES OF THIS DISCIPLINE?

1. It is to be for the improvement of the Christian.
 - a. Sometimes it is a rebuke, to cause repentance.
 - b. Sometimes it is a scourging.
 - c. Sometimes it is a chastening.
2. It may be administered by the world, or enemies of the church.
 - a. Babylon was used to rebuke, chasten and scourge Israel.
 - b. Our own faults may be the cause of our chastening.
 - c. The world chastens us because of our faithfulness, as judged by them; God chastens for our lack of faithfulness as judged by *Him*.
3. Afflictions, persecutions and trials may be used.
 - a. They are used to correct the saint.
 - b. They may be to establish him in the faith more firmly.
 - c. They have an end, their perfection in holiness.

The world often chastens us because we live above them, calling us "holier than thou," but God chastens us because we did not live high enough.

II. WHO DOES THE CHASTENING IN PARTICULAR?

“God dealeth with you as with sons.”

1. The Lord chastens those he loves. V. 6.
 - a. We should take our trials as coming from his hand.
 - b. They are to make us better runners in the race of life.
 - c. He disciplines as a father should; severe enough to correct and loving enough to entreat us to follow.
2. He knows just the disciplining we need. “He knows our frame.”
 - a. He loves us far more than our earthly fathers did.
 - b. He is far wiser than they could ever be.
 - c. How we ought to thank Him for our every chastening.
3. He either directly gives the chastenings or He permits them to come.
 - a. Rev. 3:19.
 - b. Job 2:6; II Cor. 12:7-9.

III. WHO RECEIVES THIS CHASTENING? HIS SONS.

1. We, his children are the ones, and the *only* ones he chastens.
 - a. The world may suffer, but it is for their own foolishness.
 - b. We suffer because God sends our correction, in his love.
2. We are children of God, with a family relationship to him.
 - a. Therefore, we are loved by him as a father.
 - b. Because he loves us, he chastens us. People who do not care, do not chasten their children. Prov. 13:24.
 - c. Good children receive correction, chastening, from their parents and later appreciate it.
 - d. Like a team that loves their coach, they know they are disciplined, only for their own good.

IV. HOW SHOULD WE RECEIVE THE CHASTENING OF THE LORD?

1. The reception depends upon the love of the child for its father.
 - a. Spoiled brats do not take disciplining well.
 - b. Foolish kids, who think they know more than their parents, often rebel at chastening.
 - c. Solomon often urged the youth of his day to listen and heed the correction of parents.

- d. We should receive chastening knowing that God loves us and allows only those things to happen to us that will be for our own good and the advancement of His cause and kingdom.
- e. He who has faith in his God, bows humbly before his mandates.
- f. We should say, "Thank you, dear Father, for taking some valuable thing from me, that you might give me that which is of eternal value."
- g. We should feel that this chastening is God's doings; no mistake has been made by Him. Then we will not faint when we are rebuked by Him.

CONCLUSION:

Jesus set us the example of patient and uncomplaining submission to the will of God. We must follow in his steps. His trials were bitter; his pain was excruciating; his disgrace in the eyes of sinful men was indescribable, and yet he did not complain nor threaten. His cross of shame has become the universal sign of triumph and glory. We can trust God to know what is best for his "adopted children," too. The trials of our faith exercise us unto the peaceable fruits of righteousness. After sorrow comes joy; after battles comes peace; after tears comes rejoicing, and after the night comes the morning of eternal day. Let us run the race faithfully and be ready for the crown.

Of a truth, there is a paradise within this thorn hedge of suffering. Many a time the people of God are in bonds which are never loosened until they are bound with the cords of affliction. God takes them and throws them into the fiery furnace, and the bonds are burned off. Soon they are loosed and walking in the midst of the fire, praising God. Medicine usually is not too tasty, and God gives potion after potion of the evil-tasting stuff until we yield and one acts to give us good health. He is our God and Father, and seeks only our good in every chastening. Let us yield to him; trust him and be blest by him in improving and becoming better children of our Heavenly Father, so we can run a more glorious race!

TWO OF GOD'S AUTHORITATIVE MANDATES

Hebrews 12:14-17

"Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification (HOLINESS) without which no man shall see the Lord."

INTRODUCTION:

God's laws are always important, but he has not always said, "If you do not do this particular thing you will be damned." But here he, the giver of life and all material things, has laid down two decreed essentials that carry with them, "either or else"; we must either be peaceful, and holy, or miss heaven. God considered these of great importance to his kingdom.

PROPOSITION: *Note these two God-given mandates.*

I. "FOLLOW AFTER PEACE WITH ALL MEN."

1. We are to be looking for and striving for peace.
 - a. Avoiding any passions or indulgences that would lead to friction, lawsuits or fights. Rom. 14:19.
 - b. We should lay aside causes for contention (jealousy, envy).
 - c. Strive to spread the Gospel; it makes peace. An evangelistic church is a peaceful church, among themselves. Rom. 4:7.
 - d. Strive to do good to all men. Rom. 2:10. It brings peace.
 - e. Strive to be Spiritually minded. It makes for peace. Rom. 8:6.
 - f. We are to constantly remember Christ. He is our peace. Eph. 2:14.
2. We are to be filled with His Spirit. He brings peace. Eph. 5:18-19.
 - a. He, the Holy Spirit, produces peace. Gal. 5:22.
 - b. That which passes all understanding shall keep our hearts. Phil. 4:7.
 - c. We should admonish each other that the peace of God is to be with us. Phil. 4:9.
3. We should remember that God is well pleased with men of peace. Luke 2:14.

Trials are to come upon us and bring with them persecutions. We are to manifest a spirit of kindness toward *all* men, even though they are actively engaged in violent opposition to us. We are to make war with *sin*, but not with *men*. We must fight evil

passions and corrupt desires, but not fight our own fellow "worms." Jesus left his "peace" with his disciples.

II. FOLLOW AFTER HOLINESS (Sanctification).

1. Absolute holiness is an attribute of God, and we are to be like Him. Matt. 5:45 and 48.
 - a. As Christians, we are to not fashion ourselves after our former pattern of life. I Peter 1:14-16.
 - b. We are to be a Holy Priesthood. I Peter 2:1 and 5 and 9.
 - c. We are to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. I Peter 2:11-12 and 24.
 - d. We are to give all diligence to add to our virtue those gifts of God and traits of character that will produce holiness in all purity. II Peter 1:5-9.
2. How is this holiness to be obtained?
 - a. It is the product of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38 and Gal. 5:22-24.
 - b. We are to learn of Christ and be like Him. Eph. 4:20-24.
 - c. We are to be sincere and without offence. Phil. 1:10-11.
 - d. By being followers of God. Eph. 5:1-3 and 8-10.
 - e. By accepting God's call to holiness. I Thess. 4:3 and 7.
 - f. By keeping ourselves pure. I Tim. 5:22.
 - g. By not being unequally yoked with unbelievers. II Cor. 6:14; 1:1.
 - h. By abiding in Him and not continuing in sin. I Jn. 3:6; 9-10.
 - i. By following that which is good. III Jn. 11.

Without holiness no man shall see God. Holiness is purity of life. Jesus said, "Blessed are the *pure* in heart; for they shall see God." Matt. 5:8. We can never attain perfect holiness, but by setting our affections on things above, we may walk through the fires of persecution without being scorched; invade the ranks of corruption without being defiled, and run the Christian race without stumbling or growing weary.

We are exhorted to diligence and in Christ we have an inspiring example to follow. He was always about his Father's business and he was not always trying to figure out where his next meal was coming from. We need to be diligent in seeking peace, and in developing holiness, for God has spoken, "Without which no man shall see the Lord."

A poor half-witted young man was working, digging a deep ditch. He was one of a crew. The man next to him dropped dead. He had never seen anybody die before, so when the man fell down the half-witted boy came over and tried to pick him up and make him stand up again. He, of course, failed utterly. When his other companions came over to where he was, they heard him saying to himself, "He's gotta have something in his insides." That is the need of a great number of church members today and that "something they need on the inside" is the Holy Spirit.

That *power* from God can be the *gift* from God to every person who will genuinely trust in Christ, repent of his sins, and obey His command to be baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Acts 2:38. This is seen demonstrated in Acts 5:32.

The Holy Spirit that produces Holiness of life, God's mandate, is an absolute necessity. Romans 8:9.

TWO MOUNTAINS RELATED TO JEWISH CHRISTIANS

Hebrews 12:18-29

INTRODUCTION:

There are two mountains of especial importance to all believers in Christ. Other mountains are mentioned in the Good Book, and important events transpired near or on them, but Sinai and Mt. Zion occupy the "chief seats" among the mountains. To these two and their relationship to Christians, Paul addresses himself in this portion of Scripture.

PROPOSITION: *We will draw the contrast more fully in this sermon.*

I. MT. SINAI, THE MOUNTAIN TO WHICH CHRISTIANS ARE NOT CALLED.

1. Paul here deals in the negative before he touches the positive.
 - a. As Hebrews, these Christians had been mindful of the great events that transpired at Mt. Sinai. Ex. 20.
 - b. They knew about it being a mountain that could be touched. It is still standing to this day and still touchable. Heb. 12:18.
 - c. They had been told over and over again in the synagogue all about the fire that burst forth on that memorable occasion. Ex. 19:16 and 19:18.
 - d. They knew about the trumpet that startled the people and caused them to tremble. Ex. 19:16.

- e. They knew about the Voice of God that spake in their hearing. Ex. 19:20-25 and 19:3-6.
 - d. They knew of the terror that had been stricken into the hearts of their ancestors. 19:8.
2. This is the very mountain that Paul picks out to inform them that as Christians they were *not* to come to Sinai. He tells them why; their parents could not endure that which was enjoined. Heb. 12:20. It was an imperfect covenant. Heb. 8:7-12.
 3. In the face of this Holy Spirit warning, soon there were Judaizers, Ebionites, and now we have Seventh Day Adventists, who will not be instructed by the Apostle Paul.
 4. The negative has never been popular with sinners. Paul says we are *not* to come to Sinai. The New Testament constantly emphasizes the fact that Christians are not under the law, yet many vainly linger around and about Mt. Sinai futilely seeking for a way of life there. Never was there any life in the Law of Moses. Life is in Christ and nowhere else.

II. MT. ZION, THE MOUNTAIN TO WHICH CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED.

1. Here is the positive built upon a solid negative.
 - a. As Christians they should have known that Zion surpassed all of the revelation given to Israel at Sinai. Heb. 10:16-17.
 - b. They should have been told that in Jerusalem, Jesus had been offered up as their Sin Sacrifice forever, revealing to all His people, the New Jerusalem, the heavenly. 12:22.
 - c. Therefore, we are come to Mt. Sion (Zion), from whence the Good News was first begun to be sounded to all nations. Isa. 2:1-3; Acts 2:1-47 and Luke 24:47.
 - d. They must learn, what they should have known, that we are come to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. There was no place for Sadducees in this faith. V. 22.
 - e. We, as Christians, leaving Judaism behind, have come to the "General assembly of the first-born ones," which are written in heaven. It belongs both to the earth and to the eternal transcendent heavens.

- f. They should have known that part of the children of God are still here on the earth and some are already on the other side waiting for us to come over. We are hastening to the presence of the Judge of us all.
- g. The spirits of the Just men made perfect, are the spirits of those who lived according to their light in other ages, as well as those who are in Christ, now.
 - (1) Abraham was counted righteous, when he believed God. Gen. 15:6. His justification was perfected or finished when Jesus entered heaven by His own blood. There has never been, or will there ever be, salvation OUTside of Jesus. Heb. 9:15-17.
- h. They had come, as we must come, to "Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than the blood of Abel." 12:24.

CONCLUSION:

With all this positive teaching, Paul concludes this admonition with "See that ye refuse *not* him that speaketh." He had presented the negative and the positive! That which was bondage and had passed away and that which would remain forever. This was a warning from heaven. It is still a warning from heaven, and every person on the earth should heed it and come to Jesus for His great salvation, and that immediately.

Just as the Judaism of Paul's day was insufficient, so all the plans that men have devised, outside of Christ, are ineffectual and will prove disastrous. Those who would be saved *any other way* will find they are climbing up a steep precipice of ice, toiling hard and yet slipping backwards faster than they climb. They are pouring water into a cask full of holes, laboring busily, and yet no nearer the end of their work than when they began. They are rowing a boat against a rapid stream, plying the oars diligently, and yet in reality losing ground every minute. They are trying to build up a wall of loose sand, against the ocean's tide. They are trying to pump dry a sinking ship. The water gains on them and they will eventually drown. Acts 4:12.

Such is the experience, in all the world, of all those who come to any mountain except Mt. Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant, who offers salvation to every sinning soul.

"Only trust Him, Only trust Him, Only trust Him, NOW."

SOME FINALS

Hebrews 13:1-6

INTRODUCTION:

The beginning of this chapter contrasts very strangely with the ending of the preceding chapter. It ended with "our God is a consuming fire," and this one begins with an allusion to brotherly love and what it will produce in the child of God's life. Love is the highest expression of human kinship to God, who *is love*. God has touched us on one side so we ought to touch our brethren on the other side, thereby allowing the love of God to flow from heart to heart.

PROPOSITION: *Some important admonitions to help us on to perfection in Christ.*

I. "LET LOVE OF THE BRETHREN CONTINUE."

1. They must have *had love* in order to have allowed it to *continue*.
 - a. They were of Jewish extraction, and for 1500 years they had been taught that they were the people of God and different from all other people. They had learned to love each other. Matt. 22:37-40 and Deut. 15:7-11.
2. As Christians, they had this love for the brotherhood further developed. It was a grace to be added. II Peter 1:7.
 - a. John admonishes us to love each other. I John 4:7 and 11-12.
 - b. It is an attribute of a child of God. I John 5:1.
 - c. We are to provoke each other to love. Heb. 10:24.
 - d. Paul tells the Colossians it is the bond of perfection. 3:12.

It is fitting here then, that in closing this letter, Paul should say what he had told Timothy was the end of the commandment. "The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and *love* which is in Christ Jesus." I Tim. 1:5 and 14.

II. "FORGET NOT TO SHOW LOVE TO STRANGERS."

1. This was not a strong facet of the Hebrew people. cf. They would not so much as eat with a Gentile.
 - a. They had demonstrated their lack of love for others often. Ezek. 18:18; Amos 1:11; Jn. 8:44.
 - b. They had been often taught to help others. Jesus emphasized it in Luke 10:25-37.

2. This reference was no doubt to Abraham's entertaining the men who came to his tent. Gen. 18:1-33.
 - a. Great was the blessing that came to Abraham in entertaining strangers. Gen. 18:9-14.
 - b. We, as Christians are admonished to be hospitable. Rom. 12:13; I Tim. 3:2; I Tim. 5:10; Titus 1:8.
3. The Old Testament gives us many instances of great and Godly men who practiced hospitality. Melchisedec, Gen. 14:18; Lot, Gen. 19:1; Jethro, Ex. 2:20; the Shunamite woman, II Kings 4:8 and Job 31:32.

III. "REMEMBER THEM THAT ARE IN BONDS, AS BOUND WITH THEM."

1. Jesus had spoken along this line in Matthew 25: 36 and 44.
 - a. Early Christians expected to be put in prison; we may soon need this admonition here in America!
 - b. Peter and Paul were both imprisoned during their ministries. Acts 12 and 16.
 - c. Jesus forewarned his disciples of these prospective jail sentences. Luke 21:10-17.

This was such a common practice that Paul could appeal to them to remember those in jail, just like you were in there with them. You know how they feel.

IV. HE APPEALS FOR PURITY IN THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP.

1. This was given at a time when impurity of sex relations was the common thing among the heathens. Christians would be tempted to do what was popular and had public approval. Rom. 1:26-31.
2. Christians were to be different.
 - a. They were not to practice religious celibacy and think it was more pure than marriage.
 - b. They were to honor their marriage contract; never dishonoring it by violation. Rom. 13:13.
 - c. Their marriages were not to be mere lust contracts. I Peter 4:2-5. "Whoredom and adulterers, God will judge."

V. "BE FREE FROM THE LOVE OF MONEY."

1. The Old Testament abounds with warnings with which these Hebrews were familiar, from Exodus 20 through Malachi 3.

- a. Jesus warned against this prevalent sin. Matt. 6:24-25; Matt. 16:26; Mark 10:24; Luke 6:24-25.
- b. Paul continued this warning in his messages. I Cor. 5:11; II Cor. 9:6-7; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:2.

VI. "CONTENT WITH SUCH THINGS AS YE HAVE."

1. This is the supplementary part of the above negative teaching.
 - a. The wise Solomon had taught it. Ecc. 4:6.
 - b. Proverbs emphasizes it. 14:14.
2. This contentment teaching permeates the New Testament, too.
 - a. Luke 3:14, John the Baptizer's teaching on repentance.
 - b. Paul does not forget it in indoctrinating the church. Gal. 5:26.
 - c. Timothy was admonished by the Apostle Paul. I Tim. 6:6-7.
 - d. Paul practiced contentment himself. Phil. 4:11.

CONCLUSION:

After this excellent and final appeal to them to live on the high plane laid out by Christ, he gives them this promise: "Himself has said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee." That is the promise of the true child of God.

A minister's wife was worrying about how they would get along. She could not see where their next meal was coming from. Her husband persuaded her to take a walk with him. As they walked they saw a little bird sitting by the side of the road, chirping and swaying. "Take notice, dear," said the preacher, "the bird chirps whether he had breakfast or not, and certainly he does not know where his dinner is coming from. We are of more value than the birds; God will take care of us. Let us trust Him."

THE RULERS OF THE CHURCH

Hebrews 13:7

"Remember them that had the rule over you, men that spake unto you the word of God; and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith."

INTRODUCTION:

God did not leave his church on the earth without *leadership* and the standards he set for them are worthy of the mind of God. He made provision for the church's expansion and extension and

he made a means for retaining the ones reached by the spreaders of the Good News. These, Paul reminds the Hebrews to remember, and to imitate their faith and life diligently.

PROPOSITION: *Our relationship to our rulers.*

I. THE APOSTLES.

1. These were the pioneers in the opening up of this vast international empire of God.
 - a. Peter on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2.
 - b. Peter opening up the doors to the Gentiles. Acts 10: and 11:
 - c. Paul reaching out into other lands to both Jews and Gentiles.
 - (1) Missionary journeys as described in the last of Acts.
 - (2) Epistles directed to these "Island" churches out in the *sea* of humanity (11 of them).
 - (3) Epistles directed to his associates and co-workers (3 of them).

They were the "Source men" of the Word of God, and they had spoken unto them this word.

II. THE EVANGELISTS.

1. These were the men who received the torches from the hands of the Apostles, and were to carry on their activities in spreading the Word.
 - a. Timothy, son of the mighty Apostle Paul in the Faith. I Tim. 1:2.
 - b. They had listened to them speak the Word of God. (Not just their own word.) Therefore, it was right for them to follow them, too.
 - c. No doubt Timothy, who had been warned about love of money (I Tim. 6:), would admonish them even as Paul had in Heb. 13:5. Paul says, "imitate their faith."

III. ELDERS.

1. The high standard God had set for his elders, would cause any thinking person to "*hear*" them and respect them.
 - a. They were to be mature men, Elders. I Tim. 3: and Titus 1:
 - b. Married men with successful families; demanded the respect of younger people and younger families.
 - c. They were peaceful men and hospitable.
 - d. They were not covetous, but generous.

- e. They were tried and tested men, upon whom evangelists had "laid their hands" after carefully considering them. I Tim. 5:22.
- 2. They were men of ability. I Tim. 3: "Apt to teach."
- 3. They were shepherds of the local flock. Acts 20:28-31.
- 4. They were able to convict the gainsayer. Titus 1:9.

The church was told to hear these men and to remember what they had said. They did not have a written Bible then, as we have now. They must remember the instruction when it was needed in their work. How necessary it is for us to regularly read and study the written Word, so we can have it on our tongue's tip when we need it.

IV. HOW WERE THE CHRISTIANS INSTRUCTED TO BEHAVE THEMSELVES TOWARD THESE GOD-APPOINTED MEN?

- 1. They were to obey them that have the rule of the church. Heb. 13:17.
- 2. They were to submit to them, for the good of the whole congregation. This would do away with rebellious outlaws in church. V. 17.
- 3. They were told that the report the Elder made concerning them, might be to their grief, before the church. 13:17.
- 4. They were to listen to them, and then imitate their faith and faithfulness in daily living. (As they spoke and acted.)
 - a. No doubt some of the teachers they had known and revered had passed to their reward by this time, and there would be a loving appeal to follow them.

CONCLUSION:

It is an indisputable proposition that the church had all of these men who had taught them, so Paul just reminds them to "Remember them that had the rule over you, men that spake unto you the word of God; and consider the issue of their life, imitate their faith." They were teachers and examples, just as Christian leaders are to be today, and as they were to be in submission to their rulers, so Christians are to be today; our eternal life depends upon it.

A good Sunday school teacher was explaining to her class the words concerning the angels of God, "ministers of his who do his pleasure." She asked, "How do the angels carry out God's will?" Many answers followed. One said, "They do it right away." Another said, "They do it with all their hearts." A third, "They do

it well." One youngster did not answer right away, and finally came out with, "They do it immediately, and without asking questions."

"In every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Acts 10:35.

"As servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." Eph. 6:6.

James 1:22, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only."

And God warns, "At the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, *and to them who obey NOT the gospel of our Lord.*" II Thess. 1:7-8.

