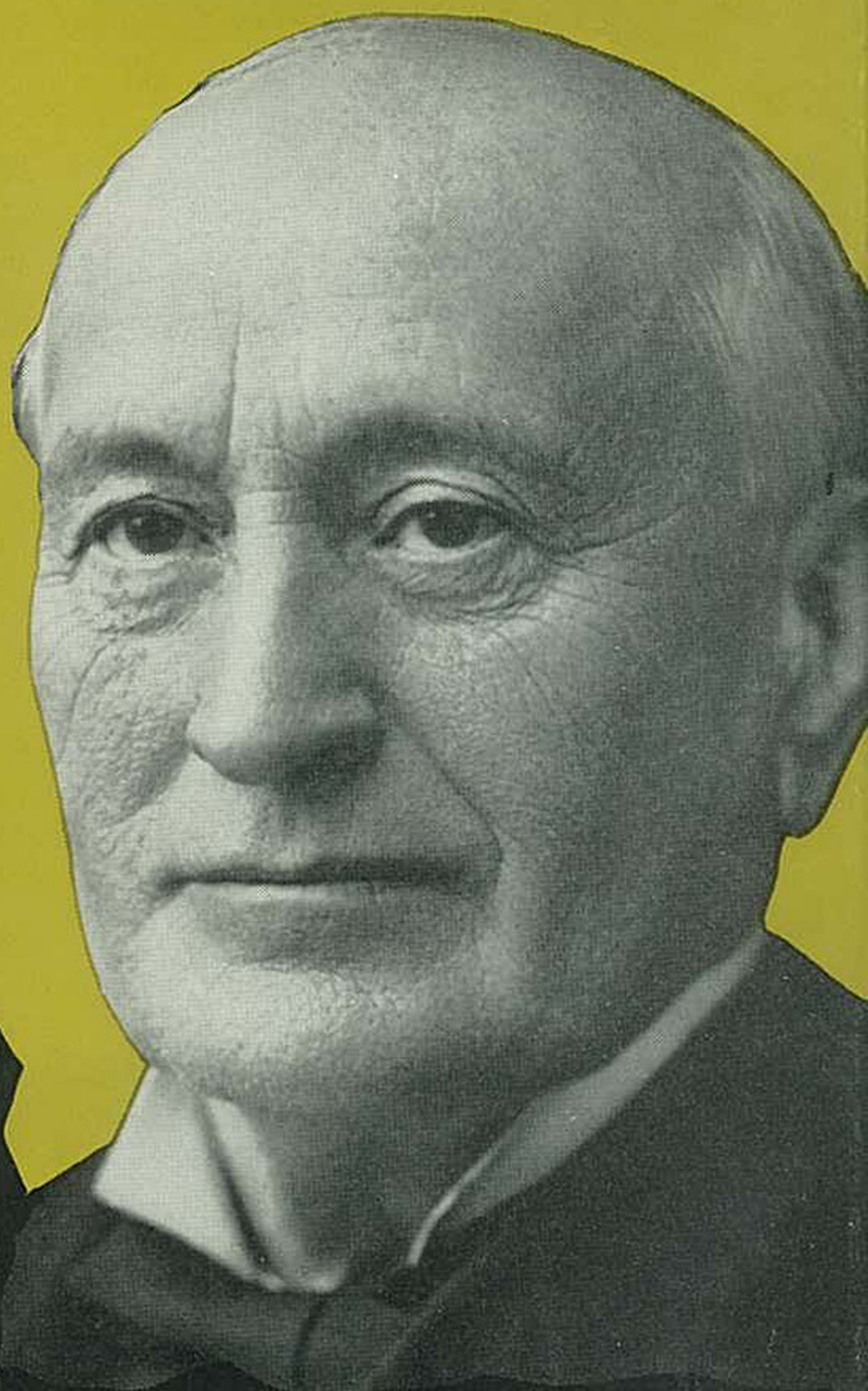


PHINEAS F.
BRESEE:



**THE
CERTAINITIES
OF FAITH**

The Certainties of Faith

*Ten Sermons by the Founder of
The Church of the Nazarene*

**With an introduction and notes
on the author's life by
TIMOTHY L. SMITH, Ph.D.**

NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE

FIRST PRINTING, 1958

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Printed in the United States of America

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Introduction

The year 1903 was one of the best in Phineas Bresee's long life. The congregation of 120 hardy souls who had eight years before gone out with him "under the stars" in the old board tabernacle in Los Angeles had grown to nearly 1,500 members. They occupied their new brick building on Sunday, March 22, 1903. The "Hallelujah March" from the old

meeting place climaxed at the altar of the new, where they laid down \$10,300 in cash to pay the bills. It was a commodious structure, large enough to accommodate great conventions and simple enough to make the poor still feel at home.

Meanwhile, generous admirers had provided a home for a Bible school, and the institution which was to become Pasadena College had survived its first season. A half dozen churches and missions around the city, ministering to Chinese and Mexicans as well as the English-speaking population, gave eager Nazarenes abundant opportunity to keep busy for the Lord.

Best of all, the leaders of the holiness movement across the nation who had in 1895 virtually ostracized Bresee for deserting the Methodist fold were now publicly acknowledging both the usefulness of his new denomination and the seeming soundness of his judgment. A week after the new building was dedicated, Dr. Charles J. Fowler, president of the National Holiness Association, arrived with evangelists "Bud" Robinson and Will Huff to conduct a twelve-day convention. The tide of spiritual enthusiasm swept away what remained of the dikes of mistrust which the Association had earlier erected against Bresee's program.

1903 . . .

A

Year

of

Fulfillment.

Although Fowler and his associates were to continue to stand officially for a loose, interdenominational organization of the work while Bresee labored to create a national holiness church, the intensity of feeling which once had marked their difference of opinion came to an end. Bresee had proved himself both a seer and a statesman. He had foreseen that the powerful drift toward worldliness and compromise would muzzle the preaching of sanctification in many of the great centers of Methodism. And, at tremendous personal cost, he had demonstrated that a new organization could be erected which would be strong enough to shelter the new converts, compassionate enough to gather in the poor, and wise enough to fend off the fanatic from its ranks.

Back home in Boston, Fowler wrote to acknowledge that everywhere he had gone since his return he had praised the Los Angeles Nazarenes and their leader. "I 'own up' that your precious people have a place in my heart—strange even to me or others as it may seem—that no other church has."

Numerous such tributes enabled Bresee in this year to slough off what remained of that reluctance with which he had founded a new denomination. There was not a sectarian bone in his body. He had left his Methodist brethren in protest against the churchly pride which sought more to win acclaim from the high and the mighty than to minister to the poor. He had avoided every kind of ecclesiastical machinery which was not necessary to the spiritual life of his people. And, save for the churches he helped establish in Berkeley and Oakland in 1896 and 1897, he had ignored or neglected calls to add a chain of far-flung congregations to his following. He maintained until his death that his life's intention was not to "build up a great 'ecclesiasticism'" but to evangelize the poor. And in the first half dozen years, Los Angeles was his field.

Now, however, the growing fame of his congregation combined with a new crisis in the question of the church

relationship of the holiness movement to thrust upon Phineas Bresee the call to national leadership. He regarded it as the work of divine providence. He moved, therefore, naturally and with vigor into his new role of bringing together from all over the nation the forces of what he called "organized holiness." He especially set out to win over reluctant churchmen like Fowler, H. C. Morrison, and "Uncle Bud" Robinson to the cause.

The first substantial accession had come the previous year when C. W. Ruth, a Pennsylvania evangelist serving as Bresee's assistant, brought the Pentecostal Mission of Spokane, Washington, into the fold. Early in 1903, I. G. Martin, a preaching song evangelist, opened a promising work in Salt Lake City. In Boise, Idaho, a Friends congregation turned over their church building and parsonage. A few months later Rev. and Mrs. J. A. Dooley converted their flourishing Pentecostal Mission in Omaha, Nebraska, into a Church of the Nazarene. They departed soon after to open a work in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Meanwhile news came that widespread dissatisfaction with the interdenominational program was rife among holiness Methodists in Chicago.

During the early part of 1903, therefore, Bresee came clearly to the vision which was to dominate the rest of his life. Let the Nazarenes establish "centers of holy fire" in all the great cities of the nation. Let them actively recruit both ministers and key laymen from those who were losing heart in the crusade to bring back the older churches to the faith of the fathers. Let them extend the largest possible fellowship to every congregation and association of holiness people. Let them stand foursquare against fanaticism, legalism, and sectarianism, even while seeking out and evangelizing the poor. And the glory and glow of their work would attract young men, strong and true, who would help build holiness churches in every corner of the land.

Two instrumentalities would be especially useful, Bresee realized, in the task of gathering up the wide-

spread remnants of the holiness movement into an organized whole: the evangelists and the printed page. He therefore quickened the pace by which famous soul winners from all over the country were brought to Los Angeles to see and share in his work. C. E. Cornell (a Friends lay evangelist from Cleveland), Fowler, Robinson, and Huff and many less well known men appeared in 1903. All the leaders of the National Holiness Association came for their annual meeting the next year, held in conjunction with the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North. H. C. Morrison, editor of the *Pentecostal Herald* and founder of Asbury College; Joseph H. Smith, later to become Fowler's successor as president of the National Holiness Association; Isaiah Reid and L. B. Kent, aged war horses of Iowa and Illinois; and W. C. Wilson, of Kentucky, one day to be a general superintendent, were guests of First Church in succeeding months. We may presume that then, as now, the lure of a trip to southern California was a factor in making their invitations irresistible. Every one of them became a bearer of good will, at least, if not a promoter of holiness union, as he returned across the country.

Meanwhile C. W. Ruth resigned his position as assistant to the general superintendent in the spring of 1903 and, with Bresee's blessing, returned to the East on a long evangelistic tour in which he served as an advance scout for the Church of the Nazarene. Ruth first laid the foundation for the congregation which was organized in Chicago the next year in a sweeping revival at the Methodist church in North Harvey, Illinois. He then proceeded to Danville for the annual camp meeting of the Eastern Illinois Holiness Association, where he worked with the future General Superintendent Dr. E. F. Walker, then a Presbyterian evangelist, and the laymen who were later to found Olivet College. Even more important, he established contact at two Pennsylvania camp meetings with his old friends in the Holiness Christian group and with the company of vigorous young men who had welded

the Association of Pentecostal Churches into a thriving New England denomination. Ruth wrote Bresee that William Howard Hoople, H. F. Reynolds, and C. Howard Davis led a "plain, fire-baptized, Holy Ghost people" who conducted "about the noisiest and 'shoutinest'" camp meeting he had ever attended.

The other means by which Bresee spread the program of organized holiness was his weekly paper, the *Nazarene Messenger*. Originally this publication had served simply to advertise and promote the Nazarene work in Los Angeles. After 1902, however, Bresee began to direct its editorials and other articles to a national audience. The magazine carried letters from Nazarenes in charge of the new outposts, news of the accession of clergymen and congregations, a trenchant column devoted to "Civic Righteousness," especially prohibition, and occasional articles which gently rebuked extreme emotional or legalistic standards. Probably most important, an abridged version of Dr. Bresee's latest Sunday morning sermon appeared nearly every week.

News of First Church remained prominent in the *Messenger's* columns, to be sure, and for a very good reason. Its thriving condition was the most convincing argument that a new denomination committed fully to the doctrine of entire sanctification could win a great following in the cities of America. God had made the Los Angeles congregation, its founder believed, a blueprint for the future. Its success was continuing proof that strong preachers might with confidence dare to break with the old churches and go after the masses.

The sermons which Dr. Bresee preached from May to September of this eventful year 1903 form the main body of this book. They are printed here exactly as the author himself abridged them, save for paragraphing and punctuation. To read them is to become acquainted with one of American Protestantism's finest souls. Poised on the pinnacle of local success, calmly and in faith awaiting the

beginning of a new and national work, alone with his beloved congregation for a few quiet months, Bresee displayed in that summer the best of his abilities as a preacher. He was still close enough to the years of humble toil and suffering to speak with pathos of the past. Yet he stood with clear vision on the threshold of the future. He spoke with the assurance of a man who knew where he wanted to go, and who had faith that God would take him there.

In this, his sixty-fifth year, Phineas Bresee undertook a task which would have staggered other men half his age. He had no illusions that it would be easy. The previous twenty years had seen the holiness movement hammered into splinters, twisted by the strength of the opposition without and the force of fanaticism within until her most optimistic leaders were tempted to despair. But this preacher had been tested in the fire, and despair was not in the emotional vocabulary of his soul. "The sun never sets in the morning," he said. However late the hour of the day, he greeted all comers with the words, "Good morning." A Christian, he declared, cannot be a pessimist.

Personally, Bresee was old enough, wise enough, and loving enough to be deemed a patriarch. His kindly judgment of men and his daring leadership had been trade-marks from the time he took his first circuit in Iowa, forty years before. A decade of eminence as the outstanding preacher of Los Angeles Methodism had not turned his head. The hardship and reproach of the years at the old tabernacle had left him unsoured. He was surrounded by a large and a deeply devoted family, in a home where piety and culture were married. His sons happily paid most of his personal bills, while their father daily emptied his pockets in his rounds among the poor. Great books, a life of compassionate service, and even greater experiences in the secret of his meeting place with God had refined his character, clarified his doctrines, and simplified his manner of speech.

Bresee's preaching, as we shall see in the sermons to follow, was intensely emotional. This was not because he glossed over the fearsome issues of life but because he plumbed them to their depths and came up in an all-conquering faith. Literary style was less important to him than communicating that faith.

Interestingly enough, old-timers remember Bresee as a pioneer in the use of the conversational tone. He ministered to plain men, and he must make the truth plain. Some have misunderstood his prescription for great preaching—"Get the glory down"—to call for whipping up a flurry of superficial excitement. On the contrary, Bresee meant that we should so preach the eternal verities of the Christian faith, so lift men and women to a vision of Christ and what His grace can achieve, that the gospel would overwhelm them with awe and joy. Divine glory was, for him, borne down on wings of truth. And he carefully expounded that truth, in friendly and conversational discourse, until the moment when its implications became so inspiring as to open fountains of emotion all over the house. Then he broke into a climax which would, almost every time he preached, sweep the congregation off their feet—or more accurately—onto them.

Professor Mallalieu Wilson, of Northwest Nazarene College, remembers that sometimes the more alert members of the Los Angeles congregation, like Leslie F. Gay, Sr., would anticipate the climax and burst into audible "Hallelujahs" before the sermon was fairly begun. Dr. Bresee would, on these occasions, say, "Not yet, Brother Gay, not yet, until I have made this teaching clear." When, minutes later, he finished expounding his message and God's Spirit had come to make truth's glory felt, the good doctor would cry, "Now, Brother Gay, you may shout." And the walls of old First Church would tremble with the echo of the people's joy.

AUGUST 16, 1903

Setting for the Sermon

It is refreshing to learn that this sermon, great by any standards, was prompted by the suggestion which a layman made the previous Sunday. Dr. Bresee had spent a lifetime storing up a doctrine of faith. He drew off the pure essence of it in one week's sermon preparation.

Note, especially, that Bresee's view of faith was the opposite of the modern notion of a leap in the dark, a venture made by one trembling on the brink of despair and doubt. His exposition will not satisfy sophisticated philosophers, perhaps, but it has the ring of Christian authority in it.

The preceding week had been a busy, happy one for the founder. On Friday he had attended the picnic of the Elysian Heights Sunday School, at Ocean Grove. An abundance of good things to eat, spread out on the long tables under the pavilion, together with "the warmth and beauty of the day," made the occasion a happy one for Dr. Bresee. If he followed the pattern of the First Church picnic, four weeks before—for which a ten-car special train and a chartered boat had provided transportation—the afternoon closed with a great song and testimony meeting. In the evening he and several others dropped into the meeting at the old soldiers' home in Sawtelle, "just to say amen," as Bresee put it, giving great joy to the grizzled veterans, who "raised a shout in the camp." The pastor wound up telling them some of the experiences of his early ministry and how he got "the blessing."

Such events reveal the great joy and radiance in Dr. Bresee's life. No wonder that on the Sunday morning a few weeks before, when he preached on "The Personal Joy of Jesus," the altar was lined with seekers and the church became a camp meeting for a day.

Here was a man who understood suffering, and his people knew that he did. He carried great burdens and endured fiery trials. Yet he preached a conquering faith. The sermon on this day explained to them whence that faith came.

The Certainties of Faith

The Certainties of Faith

TEXT: *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house (Hebrews 11:7).*

Last Sabbath a brother, a spiritually minded man, asked me to preach from this text today. I asked him what he desired me to say, as I could see at once that one could preach quite largely a historical sermon or a more direct discussion and presentation of faith. He said he desired me to preach on faith, which was such a practical thing with Noah. I said then I should have to go back to the beginning of this chapter, and get its definition. He intimated that it was important to preach on the subject of faith. So I have read this text which he suggested, not so much to discuss Noah, as the faith which he exercised.

So I asked this fundamental question, "What is faith?" The author of this Epistle has taken great care to define it in the first verse of this chapter, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

This Epistle, like most of the Epistles, is a treatise on holiness. Along the lines of the author's reasoning leading up to the final climax, he is led to discuss faith

as the great factor in receiving divine grace and favor. He comes up to the point where he quotes from Habakkuk a text which seems to have been somewhat of a favorite with the apostle, "The just shall live by faith." He is about to go on and illustrate this by the men and women whose lives had exemplified it, but before he does so he stops and defines it. He gives a clear, abstract definition of it. He seems to say, "Hold that definition steady, and it will reflect the life of every holy man that ever lived or ever will live." As sure as the sea reflects the stars, so surely in this text you will see every holy soul. Hold it steady. "By faith the elders obtained a good report." Look! There is Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and all the rest. What is it?

In it are two things, "substance" and "evidence."

Faith has to do with substantialities, it deals with certainties. I would that there might come to us clear thought in reference to faith this morning. It is the one thing about which has gathered more fog than about any other thing of which I know. Many seem to think that faith is a mental process which takes the place of certainties. One day I was going to a funeral. Riding in the carriage was a lady, a professor in a college. We were discussing faith just a little. I said faith is founded upon certainties. She said with surprise, "I thought that I had to have faith in that of which I could not be certain."

I think that is a fair putting of the ordinary conception of faith. Here is a promising prospect, looks as if it would make a mine. A man says, "I have faith in it. I take the chances, I put my money into it." Developments may show a mine or may show a hole in the ground. A man buys wheat on the market. He says, "I have faith that wheat will be higher next month." It may, or it may be lower.

What I want to say is that they use the wrong word in reference to these things. Faith never speculates, never

takes chances. Faith simply works with facts. If here is a million tons of ore in sight, every ton of which holds \$100.00 and it can be reduced for \$10.00 per ton, faith buys and applies the machinery and reduces the ore. Faith works, but with facts.

I am to deal primarily by faith with God. God as a supposition, as a possibility, as an experiment, is not such as faith can deal with. I can never have faith in an uncertainty, in a possibility, in an experiment. In this matter of destiny—of the investment of my being—I cannot be asked to speculate. I am not asked to. If God is not a certainty, if God in an incarnation is not beyond all question to me, then I cannot have faith. I might venture my soul in a speculation, but I cannot reasonably be asked to. If things are not so arranged that I need take no chances, then they are not so arranged that I can have faith. I have a right to ask for certainties here. If God is not a certainty, then to ask me to have faith in Him is to ask me to covenant and bind myself to a possible nothing. If God has not so revealed himself, so walked through this earth, if He does not so manifest himself that I can be certain, then there can be no faith.

I said that there are two words here, substance or certainties, and evidence. Certainties come from evidence. We deal with evidence until we come to certainties.

Facts are evidenced to us—seen or unseen. The sun is evidenced to us through sight. Gravitation and electricity are evidenced to us by their effects. Los Angeles is evidence by sight, but London to many of us by testimony. But facts by one class of evidence, if sufficient, are as much certainties as another. I am as certain of gravitation or electricity as of sunshine. I am as sure of the spirit life of my friend, which I have not seen, as of the body which I have seen.

Faith deals with God. God is the great fact. God evidenced himself to Noah. "God said unto Noah." How

He spoke I don't know. But He spoke very clearly and unmistakably. He told him of the Flood which He would bring upon the earth because of its great wickedness, and told him to build an ark. There could be no mistake, no questioning about it. Noah knew God and the will of God concerning him. He knew Him well enough to believe what He said, and to obey His directions.

I said that God is the great fact. I am constrained to believe that there is no fact so evidenced to men as the fact of God. The first great fact that stares men in the face, through all the universe, is God. The first and necessary question of the thinker brings him face to face with God. The first spontaneous question of the mind is necessarily, How? I look upon this earth, I see mountains and valley and flood, and I say, "How?" I see sun and moon and stars, system on system, and I say, "How?" And there is but one answer, God! The word which begins the Bible is the word where all thinking must begin, "In the beginning God." Back of everything must be thought, which must be personal. Paley's argument of design, by a watch found in the desert with its machinery pointing to one end, the marking of time, tells that someone made the watch. There is design, and back of it is the thinker. Necessarily so. Back of all things is the designer. God is the great certainty.

There lived a Man called Jesus Christ. A marvelous Man! He uttered such words and did such things that the marks that He made on this earth have never been effaced. I meet His footprints everywhere. He claimed to be divine, the Son of God, the King of truth. He claimed to make atonement for men. He was put to death on a Cross. He declared beforehand that He would rise from the dead, and ascend to the Father, and that He would send the Holy Ghost, who, with infinite wisdom and skill, should carry on His work in the earth. This slain

Man rose from the dead and ascended to the Father, and sent the Ghost most Holy to carry on His work in the earth. "Oh," says one, "you are dealing with uncertainties now." Not at all; these are the most certain facts.

If I tell you that down on Central Avenue there is an immense dynamo, and that it generates electricity, and that it is carried by wires to different parts of the city, and that streets are lighted by it, houses are made luminous, and cars are run by it, you may say I am talking theories or fancies. But I say, "Come with me," and you see the light and ride on the moving cars, and you say, "Well, I do not understand, but it is a fact."

Carlyle and Emerson sat together on a little hillside in England. Just below them was a little hamlet with a church. Carlyle pointed to it and said, "Jesus Christ built that kirk."

Look about you, but do more than that. Take the proffered key, Jesus Christ, revealed by the Holy Ghost, and put it into the mysterious lock of your own being. See how it fits and transforms you, how it becomes a living fact in your own being, and know that Jesus Christ in the person of the Holy Ghost is the great fact of these ages.

Not only is this a fact in the world's civilization—those wounded hands having lifted the gates of time from their rusty hinges, and changed the stream of history—but there are thousands about you who have seen the light and felt the power of Jesus Christ. To them He is not simply a name and an intellectual conception, but a spiritual power transforming their moral being. That Jesus Christ has walked through the years and lives in this world, in the person of the Holy Ghost, is the great fact of these ages.

Faith deals with these facts: God, God incarnate, God the Holy Ghost.

Faith is the soul's attitude of trustful obedience to these facts. Faith is the linking of the soul in loyalty to these facts. Without certainties there can be no faith. Faith rests upon the eternal verities.

God over all, the Creator of all; Jesus Christ, His Son, the Redeemer of men; the Holy Ghost, the Renewer and Sanctifier of the souls of men, are paramount facts—declared by the universe, by revelation, by the ages, by human society, by my own soul.

God spoke to Noah, just how we are not told. But He who formed the ear knows how to speak to man. He very clearly told Noah of plain facts, as well as how to do. His heart was in the attitude of loyalty to God. It is said of him that he was a just man, perfect in his generation, and that he walked with God. Now comes the peculiar manifestation of his faith referred to—he listened to the voice of God, and built the ark, and preached righteousness. He did not make converts, but he did the will of God. He faithfully warned the people, and followed the divine direction for personal safety and the safety of his family.

What is our attitude toward the great facts? Are we loyal in heart to God? God has spoken to us, spoken with a clearness and fullness and emphasis such as was impossible in those days. In these last days He has spoken unto us by His Son. His voice in the Incarnation, His voice by the Holy Ghost, speaks unto the consciousness of every man.

There is no question about being or destiny, of sin or holiness, of heaven or hell. God has spoken. He has uncovered His great heart in the death of His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life. He has set up the red light of Calvary in every man's path. Every man is warned—danger, death, damnation. Everyone is pointed in the way—life and life more abundant. There is Blood

streaming from heaven to warn men; there is Blood staining the earth to keep open the way into the holiest.

"Faith . . . is the gift of God." It is wrought by Jesus Christ. He is "the author and finisher of our faith." The condition of heart loyalty to God is peculiarly wrought in us by Jesus Christ. It is He who has brought salvation nigh by such revelation of the facts that they are certainties to us. It is He who strengthens our volition, under the light of these facts, to confess our sins. To bare our rebellious heart and lay it at His feet, He worketh in us to will. He takes our wicked heart, which volition turns over to Him, and gives us a new heart—a heart to love Him, a heart which has the attitude of obedience to Him.

But there is still in my being an inherited, unsanctified setting, with roots of bitterness, which spring up in opposition to the new life. Somehow there is in me a double mind. When I would do good, evil is present with me, and this new life is beset. My faith—my heart loyalty—is put to trying tests. But Jesus Christ is the Perfecter of faith. He cleans up the conditions of the soul, so that in the whole man there is nothing but love and loyalty to God.

This heart loyalty allies the soul with Jesus Christ in all conflict, in all service.

MAY 3, 1903

Setting for the Sermon

"On the first Sunday in May, 1903," Dr. Bresee wrote later, "God so opened the windows of heaven and deluged our souls with unspeakable glory that, when the waves had passed by a little, I said, 'This is Victory Day. This first Sunday of May we will henceforth celebrate as Victory Day.'" Thus was begun, in a manner typical of the founder, a First Church tradition.

Victory Day

Victory Day for 1903 was among the very best Sundays the church had enjoyed, a reporter wrote. This was not so much for the number of seekers at the altar as for spiritual depth and power, for "holy triumph and assurance of faith." The celebration of the Lord's Supper in the afternoon was a high moment. The service was interrupted at its beginning by the praises of a brother who had been sanctified at the noon hour. Thereafter Dr. Bresee's efforts to restrain the tide of fervor only deepened its flow. Finally, as souls wept their way to the altar for a personal baptism with the Holy Ghost, the stream of blessing overflowed its banks.

Since Dr. Bresee rarely preached twice in one day, Evangelist Joseph Jamison spoke in the evening. His text was, "Be ye holy." Additional seekers were at the altar and six united with the church—one of them a retired Free Methodist minister. The same evening, at the Mateo Street mission, a Catholic family was converted. Other outposts reported similar victories.

Dr. Bresee's sermon, printed below, set the tone for this Pentecostal day. "It was a look up and out and on for greater victories than the past, great as they have been," one wrote. Its every sentence breathes the spirit of expectancy and of optimism which gripped this man in what we often call the "declining years." No wonder that at the "Holiness Meeting" the following Tuesday afternoon, when the Ruths said their good-bys, Mrs. Ruth testified, "I love this church and long to tell other churches that there is such a thing as having the fire burning all the time."

Victory Day

TEXT: *What shall we do?* (Acts 2:37)

On this anniversary of "Victory Day" my eyes are not on the past, but on the future. I am thankful for the past, for the precious way God has led us, and the victory given. I am unutterably anxious and thankful for the future.

Our lives are ensphered with mysteries, and full of great problems. The mysteries reach beyond our farthest ken and most continued gaze, and the problems are often difficult to solve.

I sometimes stand and look out into the boundless mysteries and feel as some of the earliest immigrants to this country must have felt when they saw before them the boundless unknown wilderness, and knew nothing of what it contained, what might at any moment issue from it, whether wild beasts or monsters or savages, and knew so little of what would be the outcome of their efforts to plant a home and make provision. So I stand facing the infinite mysteries. I confess they are overwhelming both to my thought and imagination. The problems about me often transcend my mental and spiritual grasp.

You may not wonder that I need God. You need not wonder if I sometimes stand in the presence of the impending verities like a frightened bird, and can only look up and sing:

*“Jesus, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,”*

and if in the presence of the many problems I should say, “What shall I do?”

I stand with a multitude to ask it this morning.

This question was asked at Jerusalem, the city of David, the home of prophets, the place of God’s Temple. It was asked under the shadow of an ancient and continued ecclesiasticism. As dark as the shadow was, it had a silver lining of divine revelation.

It was asked under the illuminating power of the Holy Ghost.

Blind men walk surrounded by indescribable beauty or by unutterable dangers, and see nothing. So men walk amid the fathomless mysteries and the greatest problems and do not see.

There is one place where the light penetrates through blind eyes, and where blind men get at least a glimpse of the mysteries and problems about them. That place is in the light of the upper-chamber Pentecost glory, where the Holy Ghost has come. He it is who makes the blind to see and the deaf to hear, who convinces of sin and righteousness and judgment, who takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us.

The men who made this inquiry were peculiar men. Only peculiar men make it. These men were religious, they were conscientious, they were devout. They turned their faces earnestly towards destiny. They welcomed any light that came from the further shore. There broke upon them the glimmer of a new dawn, and they stretched out their hands to welcome it. Men were among them

into whom had come the glory of a new life; it shone in their faces; it glowed upon their brows; it sounded in their voices. There was a sheen of holy glory that came out from them and awoke in themselves a new intensity after righteousness, and they made this inquiry, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

And the apostle answered them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." This was a sufficient answer in a very condensed and generic form. It told them what to do in the presence of the new light. It made the duty and privilege of the hour plain. And we are given to understand by the history that they were not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. They were to repent, which brings divine mercy and forgiveness; they were to break with the old life—by putting on Jesus Christ. Every Jew and Gentile was to know that they were disciples of the Nazarene; and then as the promised Comforter had come, He would come to them also. Ere the sun went down that day a multitude had proved the truth of the Word and knew the promise of God.

This was the doorway to the answer to this question. It answered it for the hour; it opened heaven for its continued answer. This question is new every morning and fresh every evening. The path we tread shineth more and more, and every added ray makes this question to glow with deeper intensity, and every new mountaintop gained makes it open to heaven with a broader meaning. It has been the question of the days gone. God has answered. It is the question today, and the heavens are not voiceless.

This cry—"What shall we do?"—coming from honest, earnest hearts, is the longing, loving challenge to God's promise to guide His own. We look up with this cry on our lips this morning. We look up into the azure of His

revealed truth, under the light of the Sun of righteousness, which has arisen with healing in His wings, and wait to hear the divine reply.

The first answer was, and is, to put ourselves in the way to receive, and to receive the Holy Ghost. To receive Him means not only the settlement of the sin question, but the fulness of life. It means the receiving into our hearts, as His home, the Lord Jesus Christ. We are told very clearly by the Holy Ghost through the apostle, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him," and, "As many as be perfect, be thus minded." We are clearly taught in these utterances and their contexts that the same attitude and the same volitional and outer acts which brought the heavenly gift are to be constantly maintained. How did we receive Christ Jesus? By what rule did we walk? We were in the attitude towards the world of complete renunciation. Our walk towards Jesus Christ was that of reckoning all things lost, counting them as dung that we might win Him, and know Him, and be found in Him.

This is our constant attitude and walk. Our continued song is:

All for Jesus, all for Jesus,

and our constant desire and effort is to be like Him and do His will. The ministry of the Holy Ghost is to be a constant anointing. "Walking in the same way," maintaining the same consecration and trust, He abides, illuminating the Word of God, leading forth in the truth and revealing Jesus Christ in us; kindling, intensifying, thrilling, overflowing, and empowering as we may need. We are thus assured that it is the will of God, our constant and especially our present enduement with His Spirit.

What shall we do? *Standing under the arch of our new and enlarged opportunity, we are to believe and trust God.*

"The sun never goes down in the morning." With us it is just above the horizon. God has just introduced us to our possibilities. He has just begun to open the door of our opportunity. He has been showing us a little of the possibilities of the opened heavens. God has challenged us, and we have turned our hearts and opened our hands to meet the challenge. He said: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." This we have stretched out our hands to do, and God is true and faithful. A blessing—My Spirit. Sons and daughters, servants and handmaidens preach. Young men see visions, old men dream dreams. Signs: blood—the cleansing Blood; fire—the anointing glory; pillars of smoke—the witnessing testimony. Not room enough to receive it. The Pentecostal glory, the fulness of the Spirit, drunken with the new wine of the Kingdom.

What shall we do? His answer is, "Be filled with God." The fountain of all possible human doing is to be filled with the Holy Ghost. What shall we do? Open every door, push up every window, lift up every gate, let the unmeasured, uncontainable blessing fall upon us. Trust God for the victory of His own Word. It shall not return to Him void, but shall accomplish that which He pleases, and shall prosper in the thing whereunto He sent it.

*Truth crushed to earth will rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers;
But error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies amid her worshipers.*

"Falsehood however eloquently expounded will not long pay its own rent." Reforms go slowly creeping,

begging their way. There is one thing that will go leaping, bounding triumphantly along, and that is the Word of God under the baptism of fire.

What shall we do? Trust God to bring things to pass, in fiery glory. To shake the place of assembly and fill us all with the Holy Ghost, and put holy boldness into every utterance of the Word and testimony.

What shall we do? Bear the Lord's commission to go out into the highways and compel men to come in to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Compel them with holy influence, with Christly passion, draw them by the bonds of Calvary, by the power that brought Jesus from the grave, by the Holy Ghost. We go forth, not with priestly functions, not with ecclesiastical authority, not with the ordination of human hands upon our heads, but as men and women lifted out of the pit, washed in the blood of the Lamb, anointed with the Holy Ghost, to lift up Jesus Christ and let Him draw unto himself. We are the wayside preachers, the reapers, the gleaners in the harvest of our Lord.

What shall we do? Every one of us bring a sheaf for Him. The voice speaks from heaven this morning, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Who will find My wandering sheep, My lamb, and bring it to the fold?

What shall we do? Stand up before our risen Lord this morning and say, "Here am I; send me."

In building this church we have provided for the multitude—a great multitude—to hear the Word of life and sit down at the table of Love Divine. We do not expect them to come simply because the table is spread. This is a time when men are buying land, proving oxen, and marrying wives—they are absorbed in the things of earth, and we have not earthly attractions to draw them. If we had we would not use them. We have no lecturers on stars or stones, on history or travel, on great deeds

or great men, on creation days or creation nights, on unmarried women or married men. If we had our quiver full of such arrows we would carefully wrap them up in a piece of old flannel and lay them up under the eaves in the garret, where the mice could make nests of them.

We have no hired performers, either on instruments or in song. We studiously avoid performers. We seek no attraction, we want no attraction; by the grace of God we will have no attraction but the salvation of Jesus Christ. This is not a place to attract men to; it is a place to bring them and lay them down at the foot of the Cross. We play no part; we are here with the message of God. We deal squarely with dying men going to the judgment.

We are here with God's message to men, to re-echo His declaration, "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth . . . wherefore turn yourselves, and live." We are here as the sent of God to hold up the dying Christ—dying for men; to exalt the living Christ, who ever lives to save. We are here to pull men away from the very brink of hell. To proffer men "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." To cry, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

What shall we do? "Take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."

What shall we do? Having washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, we lift up our hearts in loud hallelujahs of praise and thanksgiving. We look up into the face of Jesus, who saves us by His life, who spreads out His hands before the Father and says: "Father, I will that they . . . be with me where I am," and then turns to us and says: "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

MAY 17, 1903

Setting for the Sermon

Three summers before, in August, 1900, Dr. Bresee had a close brush with death. A speeding streetcar struck the carriage in which he was returning, with his daughter-in-law and several other members of the congregation, from the Wednesday evening prayer meeting. Mrs. Mary J. Willard was killed outright. Dr. Bresee was picked up off the street unconscious, and only several days later became aware of what had happened. When, after many weeks, he appeared in public again, his hair had turned white and he had become an old man. Naturally endowed with a strong constitution, he regained a fair degree of health. But he was to bear the burdens of the following sixteen years with this additional handicap.

So it was that on this May Sunday he spoke of life and death. As always, he bathed the stern realities of human suffering in the light of Pentecostal experience. Holy living was no child's play. In the world we would have tribulations. But the way to personal victory was to be "clothed upon" by the Spirit of the living Christ.

The *Messenger* was full of encouraging reports this week—one of them from Seattle, where the "China band" had boarded ship for their departure to begin a mission in the Orient. C. W. Ruth had spent a week at Salt Lake and ordained I. G. Martin a minister. Dr. Bresee had preached the previous Friday at the Old Soldiers' Home at Sawtelle, and four sought special help.

**Not
Divested
but
Invested**

Not Divested but Invested

TEXT: *For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life (II Corinthians 5:4).*

It is not release we seek, but strength. It is not fleeing away to the skies, but to bring their gold and azure down to us. It is not escaping through the jeweled gates into heaven, but heaven ensphering us. Not to be unclothed, but clothed upon.

The apostle has been declaring that the battle is on; that a dispensation of the gospel was given him; that the difficulties are very great, but that he preaches not himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord; that he has the treasure in an earthen vessel; that there was trouble and distress and perplexity; that he was persecuted and cast down; that he bore in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus; that death was working in him. But he tells them that he does not faint, and though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day. That the "light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen."

Then he goes on to declare that if this earthly house of our "tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan; earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." And yet the apostle does not desire to be misunderstood. It is not to get out of the battle, not to get away from the conflict. We groan but it is not for deliverance by the outer gate; that will surely come. Not that we would be unclothed—that is not it—"but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

Mortality swallowed up of life is either the same thing as being clothed upon, or so consequent upon it that the apostle does not stop to explain the difference. To be clothed upon is to be swallowed up of life, and this, too, without being unclothed.

We groan—the battle is hot upon us. We are in an inexpressible condition and yet a condition that must find some expression. This is the cry of the warrior. It is kindred to the cry of Jesus himself, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" It is the burden, the oppression of the conflict that presses the groan from between the lips.

This conflict with the powers of darkness to overcome sin and to rescue human souls is no sham battle. There is far too much of simple maneuvers, of epaulets and regalia, and gold braid and lace, of gowns and bands. We have imagined ourselves in the battle, when we have never seriously and earnestly, with all the passion of our souls, at any cost, undertaken to overcome evil and rescue souls from the power of the devil. War is a costly thing. Nothing is spared in the day of battle. The warrior puts into it all he has, and the enemy is smitten in his weakest as well as his strongest place. It is not much of a battle where the warrior comes out unruffled.

Hawthorne makes one of his characters say, in the midst of sin with its awful struggle, as she stands before

Guido's painting of "Michael and the Dragon": "The archangel, now, how fair he looks, with his unruffled wings, with his unhacked sword, and that exquisitely fitting sky-blue tunic cut in the latest paradisaical mode! What a dainty air of the first celestial society! With what half-scornful delicacy he sets his prettily sandaled foot on the head of his prostrate foe! But is it thus that virtue looks the moment after his death struggle with evil? No, No! I could have told Guido better. A full third of the archangel's feathers should have been torn from his wings, the rest all ruffled until they looked like Satan's own. His sword should be streaming with blood, perhaps broken half way to the hilt. His armor crushed, his robes rent, his breast gory, a bleeding gash on his brow, cutting right across the stern scowl of battle. He should press his foot hard down upon the old serpent, as if his very soul depended on it, feeling him squirm mightily and doubting whether the battle was half over yet, and how the victory might turn. The battle was never such a child's play as Guido's dapper archangel seems to have found it."

This is true of much of the churches' conception of this battle—a dapper warrior, kid-gloved and perfumed. The real war is something very different: the overthrow of sin in our own being, the struggle with the powers of darkness, the war to rescue the captives, the slaves of Satan. He who really stretches out his hands and grapples with the powers of darkness which hold men enchained finds he is engaged in the most awful conflict the world ever saw. How often does he cry for help, and sometimes for release! Like Wellington at Waterloo, when he cried for Blucher or night, so in the awful struggle the warrior cries for help—or respite. No wonder the apostle here calls this battle cry "groaning, being pressed."

And yet there is no disposition to quit the field. It is not to be unclothed, or led out from the conflict. The true warrior is after the enemy, he presses the battle. If it rages sore he throws himself on the enemy with renewed force—like Paul Jones, when the rigging of his ship was swept away and the deck was slippery with blood, and he was ordered to surrender, he cried out, "I have only begun to fight," and did fight to victory. So when the battle goes hard there is a mighty cry to God and the pouring in of new broadsides. I do not say that he never turns his eyes toward home, that he never thinks of the crowning time. Sometimes when there was time to think, Paul lifted his eyes and felt that it would be sweet to be with Jesus, but he immediately turned them to the field and said, "It is needful that I press the battle."

There is no shrinking or withdrawing from the conflict. No running away, even to heaven, to be rid of it. We do not ask, we do not desire to be unclothed—to be led out. We do cry to God, but it is not the cry for release, but for might. Not to be divested, but to be invested. Not to be taken to heaven, but to have the might and power of heaven given unto us.

That we may be clothed upon. Just preceding this text he says, "Clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." This is a strange saying, that our heavenly house is brought from the heavens to be our present enswathement. This is not an isolated statement of this fact of being clothed upon. Jesus in His message to the church at Laodicea says: "I counsel thee to buy of me . . . white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed." Men are said to be clothed with righteousness.

The strangeness of this utterance and somewhat the strength of it is that we are to be invested with our heavenly house or dwelling place. It seems evident that in this place of conflict, of struggle, of holy endeavor,

we are to be invested with our heavenlies. It seems to me evident from the urgent teaching of the Scriptures that we are not to be clothed upon or invested with such robes as can be developed out of our own being, even by the hallowed influences from the skies.

Some things may doubtless be thus developed under the touch of God out of our own being, and we may be in some sense clothed with the graces that are pleasing in His sight. Something as nature is clothed with verdure; it is from the earth under the touch from the clouds. Under the softening and percolating influence of the showers from the heavens the grasses and flowers cover the earth. But the pastures are not only clothed with verdure, but with flocks; that which, while it is connected with it is not of it, and never could have been developed out of it.

Under the hallowed touch of the Spirit of God something of faith and love and gentleness and patience and long-suffering, something of intensity and passion may be developed in our own soul. But in this awful conflict with the powers of darkness, in prosecuting this war of conquest to which Christ has sent us, in rescuing from the prison house of sin the captives of Satan, all that has been called forth in our own being, all the stirring of our intellectuality, all the moving of volition, all the coloring of imagination, all the oneness of purpose, all the intensity of mind and heart, all are utterly insufficient to rout the enemies of God and take the strongholds of sin, overthrow the citadel, spoil the goods of the enemy, and liberate the captives. We must be clothed upon with our house from heaven.

What does this mean? What is the house with which we are to be invested? What is the inspired thought and faith of the holy men of the ages? Hear Moses' triumphant faith amid the surging of the billows, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations."

Hear David's exultant cry, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." John, the beloved disciple, says: "He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him." And Christ's own prayer for His disciples is that they may dwell in Him. And He has told us that He would come and receive us unto himself. He makes our dwelling place, and where He is is heaven.

This investment is none other than the manifest presence with us of himself. This cry in the midst of the battle is for God: God manifest, the revelations of His power, the vindication of His own cause by the uncovering of His arm. God in His infinite wisdom and love knows how to ensphere His saints with His own presence and glory and so give them power and victory. I do not know just how the manifestation came but even the eyes of the wild beasts saw it when Daniel laid his head upon the lions. Even the fire saw it when there walked the form of the Fourth with the Hebrew children. The flaming tongues were upon the brows of the disciples and there was a noise, a conquering noise, that overthrew prejudice and brought men to Jesus.

He who is our home in heaven and dwelling place on earth, He is to fill us with His presence and ensphere us with His glory—the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne is to feed us and lead us unto fountains of living water and bring us forth in His own strength to do His service. The helmet upon our head which is salvation is God; the breastplate which is righteousness is God; the shield which is faith is God; the power in the blade which is in our hand is God. The munitions of rocks about us is God. Our habitation is God. The Pentecostal experience is God. There is but one place where this poor, sick, troubled, restless heart can rest, and that is in the bosom of God. There is but one thing that can make its throbbing strong enough to reach the souls of men

and that is God's presence. We are to be invested when the Holy Ghost comes upon us.

That mortality might be swallowed up of life. This is another way, perhaps a more crowning way of stating the same fact of the investment with the Divine Presence. To swallow up may not mean to destroy, but it does mean to envelope, to surround, to put out of sight, to overwhelm. Mortality is still, at least for a time, in the investment; but it is environed with life, as death is swallowed up in victory, when a man like Stephen dies. Death is here, but overwhelmed by the revelations of glory and the triumphs given. So mortality is here but so ensphered and environed, so invested—so clothed upon with our house from heaven—that the battle is fought, the conflict is pressed, not by mortal elements, but by the power of an endless life. It is not the breath that is in the nostrils; it is not the thought that is in the brain; it is not the throbbing of the heart that doeth the work but the environments from heaven.

MAY 31, 1903

Setting for the Sermon

The Messenger for May 28 bore the following announcement in heavy black type:

Next Sabbath, May 31st, will be the Anniversary of Pentecost. This Anniversary we always celebrate, and look for the open heavens. At the First Church in this City, Dr. Bresee will preach an appropriate sermon at 11 a.m. At 3 p.m. Pentecostal Praise services will be held. At

night the pulpit will be filled from the Presbyterian General Assembly, now in session in this City. The promise of the Father insures great blessings.

The sermon was, indeed, "appropriate." The copy which Dr. Bresee prepared for the paper shows the marks of haste. Perhaps he was too busy attending the sessions of the Presbyterian Assembly to go over and correct its sentences. But the message nonetheless radiates the blessing of holy contentment which this summer brought to Dr. Bresee.

He spoke not of the initial experience but of the life of holiness, as in fact our fathers often did. Holiness, he said, is "not for the thrill of a moment, but for the heart to heart fellowship with the Holy Ghost as He pours His own life and transforming glory through and through us for all ages." At the close, a husband and wife came to the altar and four joined the church.

No wonder that in the afternoon praise meeting those who testified to sanctification dwelt not only on "the greatness of their deliverance" when "anger, impatience, doubts, and fears were taken out" but stressed as well how the Holy Ghost there "began to reveal in them Jesus Christ, and to lead them forth into the rich fields of the illuminated Word of God." Christian perfection was not for them the end of the race, but the point of its earnest beginning.

That evening, when Dr. James H. Hoadley, of New York City, preached a fervent evangelistic message from I Timothy 1:15, the tide was still running high.

Two days later, Bresee's temperance editor wrote of the General Assembly that "its evangelistic and aggressive spirit was a genuine surprise." The Presbyterians, he said, were throwing off their conservatism "and adopting the methods that once characterized Methodism."

After Pentecost

After Pentecost

TEXT: *Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied (Acts 9:31).*

To a heart alive to the power and the glory of the gospel of Jesus Christ there is no epoch the mention of which brings a gladder benediction than that of Pentecost.

It stands for the greatest facts and richest experience; indeed, it comprehends everything else in its richer glory.

We celebrate the day when the Incarnation dawned, and join with the angels in the song of good will.

We remember with holy reverence the day He suffered. We live it over on Good Friday, amid shadows and tears.

The Easter Day that marks His coming forth from the grave is of glad import, beyond expression.

But all of these go before and prepare the way for the Pentecost. He laid aside the glory which He had with the Father. Though He was rich, yet He became poor and was born into this world to make atonement for sin. He pressed His way to Calvary and laid down His life, that men might be saved. He came forth from the

grave in mighty triumph over the powers of darkness, that men might be raised to newness of life.

But having completed the atonement and ascended to the Father, He shed forth the Holy Ghost, who came into this world to make all which had gone before effective. But for the coming of the Holy Ghost all else were lost. Jesus came, suffered, died, and rose from the dead, that the Holy Ghost might come, and He makes effective and glorious Christ's coming and ministry. But for the coming of the Holy Ghost all that went before would have disappeared. The coming of the Spirit established Christianity, and continues to give it power and efficiency.

The Comforter—the Holy Ghost—had come. Jesus said from the brow of the Mount of Olives: "Wait for the promise of the Father." "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." And the disciples waited in prayer and expectancy, and the "not many days" passed. When that day had come, the Holy Ghost, according to prophecy, according to John the Baptist, according to Jesus' own promise and statement, burst forth into this world with peculiar power and glory.

He came into the world with some peculiar accessories. There was a sound as of a mighty, rushing wind and there was visible flame on the brows of the disciples. This is not to be wondered at, for special manifestations of the Divine Presence have often been attended by peculiar demonstrations. When God descended on Mount Sinai, the fire burned about its brow and went up like fire out of a furnace, and the mountain quaked to its foundations. So fearful was the sight that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." When Jesus was born into the world there was the marvelous star, and the light which shone on the plains of Bethlehem, as well as the angels' song. It is not to be wondered at, that when the

Holy Ghost came into the world to take up His abode in human hearts there was a rushing sound, and flames on the brows of those who awaited His coming. When he came He was to purify human hearts, lead them forth into all truth, and reveal to them the Christ.

His coming not only strongly marked and differentiated the disciples from the world, but gave them conquering power; it not only brought on the battle afresh, but it gave the victory. It was God's power in this new manifestation that brought 3,000 devout Jews to the feet of Jesus, and 5,000 more at the next onset.

Then in the matter of Ananias and Sapphira, such awe came upon the people as to bring multitudes more to His feet as His disciples. This brought on renewed persecution, and Stephen fell covered with glory in the front of the battle, and the disciples were scattered abroad, but they went everywhere preaching the Word. In the midst of the conflict Saul of Tarsus was converted. Then there came a lull in the conflict. The enemy seemed for a time to withdraw from the front.

God gives victories sometimes which seem to stun the very powers of darkness. So now it is said that the church had rest or peace, and was edified. Perhaps the churches win as great victories when the fires of persecution rage hottest as at any time. When men go down by the hand of the persecutor, someway other hands catch the banner and bear it on. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church, so that as the blood flows and the harvest of heroes spring up all about, the enemy himself is sometimes paralyzed.

But the time when there is a lull in the battle of persecution seems to be a peculiarly opportune time for Christian edification.

The edifying of a soul is a very wonderful thing. It may be somewhat of a poetic utterance, but the fact itself is something more than poetic. It really means to

build up. The foundation is laid. This building up did not have to deal with the sin question. This early church which had just emerged from Pentecost and from renewed anointings, who had their hearts purified, had also the graces of the Christian life. It was in their enlargement, and thus making possible the richest manifestation of the Divine Presence, that this edifying consisted.

Primarily, it is learning of Jesus, learning His own meekness and lowliness. (Pride is taken out when the Blood is applied by the Holy Ghost, but how rough and unfinished we are!) These are something more than the absence of pride—they are the positive elements of life. They were the crown jewels in the very being of the human life of Christ. Mildness of temper, gentleness, forbearance, supreme submission to the divine will, these come alone from walking in communion with the Holy Ghost. This is the unostentatious, unseen transformation, the transfiguration that comes from closest fellowship with the Holy Ghost. It is not the result of reason or judgment. As no philosopher ever discovered its beauty, so human reason rarely approves of its perfection. The greatness of meekness and lowliness is a divine revelation, and can only be seen under the clear light of the Spirit, and can only be possessed by the continued enswathement and transfiguring power of His presence.

The greatness of the kingship of Christ is His meekness and lowliness. This is the resplendent jewel that when men saw there was no beauty that they desired. The light of God on human eyes for the ages begins to enable a soul here and there to get some little glimpse of some of the colors of its matchless glory, but to see anything of its full orbit of beauty, the eyes of men still wait a further touch of the divine hand. We only know it as it is imparted to us. This was a time of transfiguring, teaching of meekness and lowliness.

This edifying is the enlargement of the graces brought forth under the baptism with the Holy Ghost. Under that baptism servile fear is taken away, and a boldness is inspired. This seems to be more what I may call a crisis boldness. It is very essential and excellent, but it seems to be the design of the Spirit to edifice in the soul not only a boldness for a crisis, but a finer element of courage, that would not simply die in the onset, but that lives in obedient loyalty to spiritual truth.

It seems to me that it needs a finer element of courage to meet all the attacks of worldly forces with fullest loyalty to spiritual truth than in a great onset to die for the truth—when it is either standing firm or being a traitor to the King.

Paul illustrates this finer courage when before King Agrippa and Bernice and Festus, with their great pomp, together with the chief captains and principal men, he is permitted to speak and tells them with such noble simplicity the story of his conversion, and how, having obtained help from God, he had continued. And when he had made that personal appeal to Agrippa, Agrippa said, "With a little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a Christian." Me, the great king, the friend of Nero, and there was contempt in his very voice. "With a little . . . make me a Christian." And then Paul said, with what seems to me a refinement of courage, a courage that rose above all conditions—social, governmental, and political—that rose in its humble grandeur above human conditions, "I would to God that whether with little or with much, not only thou but also all that hear me this day might become such as I am."

The Holy Ghost will edifice in us courage to live for Christ. So also of all the other graces—knowledge of God, brotherly kindness, love. The Holy Ghost not only edifices in us conditions for crises, but for living, for dying, for abiding about the great white throne.

The baptism with the Holy Ghost is at the beginning of things. A man is converted that he may be thus baptized. His divine commission is to tarry and receive the Comforter. When the Holy Spirit has come He not only panoplies him for the conflict, but especially works in him the likeness and image of Christ.

We are in this divine school of personal edifying—transforming power and glory. It is not for the thrill of a moment, but for the heart-to-heart fellowship with the Holy Ghost as He pours His own life and transforming glory through and through us for all ages.

This also is the law of multiplication. The days when there is the lull in the persecution—if the lull is because the enemy has been so wounded that he has withdrawn for a little from the field—is a special opportunity for the work of God.

There are two things which cause the enemy to be quiet. One is compromise with him; persecution ceases because we have gone over to the enemy. The other is that the devil is so sore pressed by the thrusts of the Spirit's sword that for a time he withdraws from the conflict. I think sometimes he doesn't know what to do.

When he tempted Jesus and that hand of power threw the javelin three times into his very being, he left Him for a time. And I think that sometimes as he has poured out the vials of his wrath in persecution until the blood of the martyrs flowed everywhere and it seemed he would soon have the cause buried forever, to see springing up out of the very blood a multitude to die for Jesus Christ has appalled him and made him fear for his very throne and he has drawn off his cohorts.

Such a time seemed to have come just at this time. The conflict with the risen Christ was new to him. He had been badly wounded at Calvary and almost thrust through by the resurrection of Jesus. And now this coming of the Holy Ghost was the stretching out of the

arm of God to smite him right and left. He is cast down. He is under the heel of the mighty Conqueror; his mightiest efforts are circumscribed by this new manifestation of God.

Someway there is rest from persecution. Rest without compromise, rest without weakness, rest that meant added opportunity. The church "walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Ghost," and the result was multiplication. Rest by compromise means paralysis and death. Multiplication by any process but by the power of the Holy Ghost may mean numbers but not strength, the register of a graveyard and not of a living army. The devil is well pleased to have the church accumulate wealth, to have it spending its force in culture, to have it a connoisseur in art. Holiness through the Blood applied by the Holy Ghost, heavenly-mindedness that comes through the transformation of the Spirit, is the only thing that tells before the great white throne.

Here is the conquest that comes through victory. The enemy has been routed by the blood of the Lamb and the word of the disciples' testimony, and now the Holy Ghost does His office work. He convinces of sin. He reveals holiness and casts out carnality.

Taking this history together it is a post-Pentecostal experience. It is battle with sin and the devil to the very death; it is victory through the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. It is the spoiling of the enemy and taking souls captive for Jesus. Jesus Christ orders the battle. He said, Go—"Lo, I am with you alway." He never quits the field. He is traveling with His blood-dyed garments in the greatness of His strength, mighty to save.

JUNE 7, 1903

Setting for the Sermon

The Continued Message

The first year's classes at the Pacific Bible College, with forty-two enrolled, had come to an end the last week in May. The sermon below is in a sense Dr. Bresee's baccalaureate to the students, as well as an exhortation to the church congregation. So missionary-minded and evangelistic had the school been that Rev. Mary A. Hill, the principal, had left before its close to go to China. Many students had begun preparing for other fields. The evening service on this Sabbath had, in fact, been reserved for a "platform" meeting, devoted to testimonies and a description of plans by a band of workers, mostly students, about to start a summer's missionary tour in the mountainous regions of Riverside and San Diego counties.

At such a moment, Dr. Bresee challenged his people with the ideal of personal identification with Christ. The sermon speaks for itself, at once so powerfully and tenderly that nothing needs to be said about it here. Four came to the altar at its close and, as a reporter put it, "heaven seemed to open upon them." It always does when the vision and love of the Saviour draw us to complete consecration to His will.

The Continued Message

TEXT: *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world (John 17:18).*

There are few texts which stretch out their arms as does this one. It reaches back and up to the throne. It opens its eyes upon the very heart and act of God in giving His Son and sending Him forth into the world to redeem and save men. It reaches its hand out through the ages, laying its finger upon the purpose and act of Jesus in sending men forth to represent Him in the earth. This text, as brief as it is, reaches from before the foundation of the world to the final coronation of Jesus as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

It is not my primary thought this morning to trace the similarity of motive or love that burned alike in the heart of the Father in sending His Son, and the heart of Christ as He sends His disciples, but more especially to speak of the closer relationship as it exists between the Father and the Son, and Jesus and His disciples as they are sent forth into the world. Jesus prayed for a unity which was real oneness. "I in them, and thou in me." So that the relationship of the disciples to Jesus is in some sense the same as that of Jesus to the Father.

I desire to mark some of the facts which grow out of this oneness.

"As thou hast sent me." *Jesus Christ was absorbed in the Father, who sent Him.* Though He loved the world, and lived and died for it, yet in a far higher and more comprehensive sense He did it unto the Father. The first utterance we have from His lips is that the Father's business absorbs Me. We hear Him say, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." I "do the will of him that sent me." When He prayed and bled in Gethsemane, He said, "Father, . . . not my will, but thine, be done." If you mark closely His life, you will see that there was one thing that absorbed Him, whether He waited or toiled or prayed or wept or rejoiced—the one great fact was the Father.

"So send I them." *They whom Jesus sends are absorbed in Him.* They love men and are anxious to serve them, but the one great, absorbing fact is Jesus Christ. They are one with Him, united in mystic unity. All things are unto Him and for Him. Jesus Christ as the world's Redeemer bore in His heart the infinite love of God for men, and for their sakes He lived, longed, toiled, suffered, and died. But I have been surprised to see how much more He died for the Father than for man. He died in man's stead, but how largely it was for the Father's sake!

Infinite love must find a way. I do not understand it, but someway, speaking after the manner of men, infinite love can only live in finding a way. God gives His Son, the Son gives himself. It is for man, but it is unto divine love, unto the necessities of the heart of God.

Those whom Jesus sends go for His sake; they love men, but the love of Christ constraineth them. Christ wills it; Christ sends, and they go. Their ministry is unto Him and for Him, and their reward is from Him. Neither success nor failure can largely add to or detract

from the glory of our reward. There is but one thing which can affect it, and that is the strength of the passion of our devotement to Jesus Christ.

Stephen may not have gathered many souls. He may seem to have been defeated as he went down under the fusilade of stones. But Christ arose from His throne and stood with outstretched hands to bid him welcome, and when the martyrs march around and cast their crowns at Jesus' feet, he will be in the front rank. Men live and triumph or suffer and die with like victory, because it is unto Jesus Christ.

It is not success which gives us joy in the highest sense. We are glad of success, and pray with Moses, "Establish thou the work of our hands." But whether there comes success or failure, having stretched out our hands full of the love of Christ, it is His joy which thrills us. If there seems to be the absence of success, and prison walls are about us, and a stone is our pillow, yet the dungeon flames with light, and "prisons, palaces prove if Jesus abides with us there." From the stone pillow we see visions of Him so glorious that earth is lost to sight as it recedes, pushed back by the nearer heavens.

There is but one thing which is real success, and that is to possess Him. There is but one thing that is real failure, and that is to be without Him.

Jesus' communion and fellowship were with the Father. No one can go with Him through those days of His ministry and not recognize that He had meat to eat the world knew not of—to do the will of His Father in heaven—and that the eyes of His soul were constantly fixed on the Father's face, and that He is uttering to himself—sometimes aloud—"Father . . . I know that thou hearest me always." We see Him continually turning away to the deserts and the wilderness and the mountain fastnesses to pray and have communion with the Father,

until the mountaintops flame with the infinite glory forever.

So our fellowship is with Jesus Christ. We have no fellowship with the world. We seek the world for Jesus. We draw it through His love with bands stronger than the bands of a man, but it is because His love lives in us, and we want it for Him. We have fellowship with His saints, because He abides in them, and makes the fellowship sweet and blessed. But He is all and in all. Where He is, is heaven; where He is not, is hell.

*Thy presence makes my paradise,
And where Thou art is heaven.*

We do not do this service for the sake of service, nor success, but for Jesus' sake; to walk with Him in white is more than all else.

Jesus sends His disciples to do the same work for which He was himself sent. He had His own part of the work to do, but it was the same work. He laid the foundation; we help to build the superstructure. He made the atonement, but we bear it to the hearts of men. He opened the fountain in the house of David for sin and uncleanness, and we bear the water to human lips. He shed the Blood; we bear it in the golden censer of the gospel to the souls of men. He broke the seals and opened the volume; we tell the tidings. The works which He did, we do also and even in greater plenitude of converting power, since He has sent the Comforter.

In some sense the disciples of Jesus whom He sends have the same preparation. That preparation is the presence and power of the Holy Ghost. In some way the humanity of Jesus needed—peculiarly needed—the anointing glory of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost had been in the world resting upon the holy men and women of God. The prophets had written and spoke as they were moved by Him. Elizabeth and Zachariah were filled

with the Holy Ghost. Simeon and Anna also knew His blessed anointing. But Jesus was to be anointed above His fellows. And the Holy Ghost descended as a dove and abode upon Him.

We have the same preparation. He was very definite in this, that His disciples should have the proper preparation and enduement. He declared to them, "I will not leave you comfortless" (or orphans)—I will send the Comforter. "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." The same Holy Ghost which came upon Him, He shed forth upon His disciples in the upper chamber and still continues to give. He is fulfilling the promise of the Father, given for these days, to all who are afar off, who hear His call and walk in the light.

The peculiarity and necessity of this equipment which is common to Jesus and His disciples must be dwelt upon, emphasized, and it must be received, as without it we are without commission, without authority, without power. When Jesus began His ministry He began with the text of the prophecy of Isaiah which He applied to himself. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." He was anointed. Upon Him, this peerless Man, this Man in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, upon His humanity was the anointing of the Holy Ghost, coming and abiding upon Him, that He should be the Prophet—the special Proclaimer to men of the divine message.

This same marvelous One ministereth the Spirit to us. It is He who told them to tarry until the Holy Ghost came upon them. It is He who baptizeth with the Holy

Ghost and fire. We are to have the same equipment in this respect which He had. As the Spirit was not given in measure unto Him—there was no measuring line that measured the Spirit gift upon Him—so He giveth the Spirit without measure unto us. Who can measure personality, divine personality?

This baptism with the Holy Spirit is the presence of Jesus Christ in the fullness of His blessing. He said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." Jesus said of His going away, in explanation, "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me," that "ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. . . . I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." This evidently refers to the time of the fulfillment of the promise of Jesus. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." This Spirit baptism is His coming, His manifestation, His equipment of His disciples with His own power.

This spiritual glory from the risen Christ is our only real preparation to do His work. Without this we are nothing; with this we have all that is necessary to bring the tidings of life to human hearts. Not simply to human understanding, but with all illuminating force and power, the Spirit's Sword cuts to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, revealing to men their need of salvation and eternal life.

Perhaps I should return to consider a moment the Christly purpose and our close relation—our oneness—with Him in that purpose, and in carrying it out.

Jesus Christ had, in reference to men, one supreme purpose. As He stood before Pilate He said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." This testimony by Him unto the truth is defined in its purpose by His own statement that "the Son of man is come to seek and

to save that which was lost." And the further statement, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

As the Father was in Christ in His atoning love, in His ministry, in His tears, in stretching out His hands to men, to God, so the divine Christ is in us in our stretching out our hands to bring souls to himself.

When I stretch out my hands this morning with this gospel to men, it is not me—I am but the poorest earthen vessel—but Christ in me and through me, who talks to your inmost consciousness and opens up to you the way of eternal life. The indwelling divine message pressed out through the lips of Jesus on all occasions—to the multitudes, to the individual soul, and to the two or three—the utterance of the way of life.

Nicodemus came to Him by night. What pains Jesus took to uncover his need, to tell him of the new birth and point him to His own sacrifice through the uplifted serpent! There was a poor sinful woman in Samaria whose heart was hungry for salvation. And it is said Jesus "must needs go through Samaria." How that need centered in that hungry heart! How earnestly and effectively He opened up to her the way from her sad condition to the better life!

As the Father sent Him, so He sends us to preach the gospel by the wayside, to tell it to human hearts, to testify of Him and His power to save, whether men will hear or scorn, to get our arms about them and bring them to God.

It does not mean that everyone will hear. They did not hear Him, they called Him Beelzebub, and it is not to be wondered at if they treat the members of His household more or less in the same way. But Jesus works through us to greater advantage than in His own incarnation. The kernel of corn has fallen into the earth and died and sprung up into spiritual power, so that He

says, "Greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." He is in spiritual force, and penetrates within the barred doors, to convince of sin and righteousness and judgment. He bars with new celestial power and glory the utterances of the gospel, so that they penetrate through the joints of the harness. And thus the lost ones are borne more frequently on His bosom---to the garner of God.

JUNE 14, 1903

Setting for the Sermon

Christian

Boldness

"Sabbath last, June 14th, to the people in the First Church of the Nazarene," so the report in the *Messenger* ran, "was one of the days of the Son of Man. . . . In the morning Dr. Bresee preached from Romans 10:20,—'But Esaias is very bold.' He dwelt upon the true boldness, inspired by the Holy Spirit, as manifest in the soul's attitude towards and obedience to the truth. Five united with the church and there was a spirit of deep conviction.

"In the afternoon, the bi-monthly Love-feast was held. . . . As the bread and water was being partaken of, Brother Gay at the same time reading the 17th Chapter of John, every heart seemed to eat the Word of the Lord and rejoice in the precious fellowship. Jesus seemed again at the head of the table and love for Him and His church burned in the hearts of the saints. As many told out the marvelous love which Jesus had put in their heart, the fire burned more and more until the multitude were filled with holy joy, which swept on with mighty victory and at the close Jesus crowned the altar with His own baptism, which sanctifies and clothes upon.

"The evening service was ushered in with something like what was heard in the upper chamber at Jerusalem. . . . When the workers came in from the street, where they had been having a mighty meeting, it was as an avalanche of power and the victorious shout of triumph broke over all. The praise service was tremulous with holy power. Rev. E. E. Scott, of the Methodist Church of Canada, preached an earnest, evangelistic, effective sermon from St. John 3:16. . . . Dr. Bresee exhorted and invited seekers, and several anxious souls responded. . . . we have rarely had a sweeter, richer day at the Nazarene Tabernacle—to Him who giveth, be all the glory."

Christian Boldness

TEXT: *But Esaias is very bold* (Romans 10:20).

Bold men in this sense are not as plentiful as we could wish. Impetuous men, rash men, are not scarce. Men who are capable of heroic acts are all about us.

But bold men in the sense of this text are not very plentiful and when they do appear the world attempts to destroy their influence or kill them off, in one way or another, as soon as possible. When the man is dead, when he is cold and stark, it begins to dawn upon men that there has walked among them a real prophet. After a while they begin to say that he was a real man, a true man, he saw further than his generation. He is worthy of being remembered, let us build him a monument. Thus it has come to pass from the beginning that men kill the prophets, and their children build their sepulchres. The Isaiahs have been sawn asunder, the John the Baptists have been beheaded, the Peters crucified, the Stephens stoned, the Husses and Jeromes burned at the stake, the Luthers and the Wesleys hounded by the powers of darkness, the Lovejoys and Haddocks persecuted and slain.

There have always been those who have thought that if there could only come a perfectly wise, pure, holy

teacher, with what joy they would receive him! But when He came they simply said, "Come, let us kill him."

If Jesus Christ could come today and live among us as a man again, perfect in moral character, in the apprehension of truth and righteousness, and infinitely wise as to methods, there is not a public office in this country He could be elected to, not a school board, not a board of aldermen nor police commissioners nor legislature. He could not be made a United States senator, nor president, nor even chairman of a political convention. It is very doubtful whether He could get elected bishop, or appointed as presiding elder, or even get the pastorate of any large, fine church. He would not be considered available. His impracticable notions could not be brooked. His method of dealing with the buyers and sellers in the temple would be too much of a drawback and His way of looking at everything from the position of righteousness and their relation to spiritual verities and eternal things could not be tolerated and would not be, in any place of influence or power.

And the men who faithfully follow Him will not be long in finding their place in the same category. And yet this boldness is the "virtue" (courage) which is to be built into faith itself, or rather it is the first outgrowth of faith, a very part of faith—faith rising into life. Something of it enters into the becoming a Christian, and the uprising and outgoing of the Christian life can only be through the bursting forth of this experience. Faith and holy courage are forever inseparable. This boldness is the very beginning of faith's activity.

General O. O. Howard says that when he went to the altar in a little place as a seeker of salvation it took more courage to do so than to face the battle roar on any field of strife. It takes a deeper and finer quality of courage. You can hire men at comparatively small

price to go forth and stand in rows to be shot at on the field of battle. But the highest offers of manhood, of nobility and excellence, the price of which is above rubies, are insufficient to induce men to seek God and to walk in the ways of holiness. But faith in God under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit will enable a man to be filled with this Christian boldness. It does not flaunt itself, its voice may not be heard upon the streets, but it is true, abiding faithful.

You find the necessity of this boldness and its operation almost everywhere in genuine Christian experience. You see it in the soul's attitude toward truth. There comes a time when the higher, deeper truth, made luminous by the Holy Ghost, dawns upon every heart. Why are men not anxious to know the truth, to gaze into it, and adjust themselves to it, and be governed by it? Simply because we are too great cowards. Shakespeare says: "Conscience makes cowards of us all." I notice that all of those who seek the Lord have to be strengthened. About the last thing souls do before they are saved is to look the truth in the face. Doing this brings surrender and trust in Jesus Christ.

This effort to get away from the truth, which so peculiarly marks this age, is an incomprehensible fact. That men will not consider is not peculiar to this age, but it is wonderfully emphasized. Everyone should pray God to give him this much boldness to enable him to seek to know the truth. It is cowardly not to do it, and yet a man is too big a coward to do it. Saul of Tarsus would never have been converted had he not looked the truth square in the face. If he had done as some of us have done—closed his eyes to it, turned from and evaded it—he would have said, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are [I am] not saved." Instead of that he was able to say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

The proper attitude toward faith is that of obedience. A man must be a bold man to have that attitude. As a man lifts his eyes toward the light of truth, the Spirit of God, who reveals the truth, reinforces his will with sufficient courage, if he will use what he has. Man needs to gaze at the truth, looking to God to give him the strength of a divine impulse. Without this we will break down and fail.

I have sometimes looked at Moses, in the court of Pharaoh, forty years of age, educated, a military leader, influential, within the reach of imperial power. The truth dawns anew by the Spirit of God upon him. He sees reproach and ignominy with the enslaved people, the race of his fathers. The light shines strongly—these are God's people. The promise of God is upon them. It took a bold man to look the facts in the face. A coward would have hid in the corridors of policy. To go with them was to put away all seeming possibilities, not only for himself, but for them. But he looked straight into the face of God; and thrones, and courts, and money, and armies all sank into insignificance. He took his staff and turned his eyes toward Goshen. He saw the atonement of God by Jesus Christ and counted reproach, for the Lord's sake, greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. Worldly policy would say, "What a pity! He might have done something, but he has buried himself with that rabble of slaves; he will never be heard from any more. What a pity a man will be so lacking in judgment!" But Moses was heard from, because God was heard from.

A proper attitude of obedience compels a bold, heroic course. Isaiah had preconceived ideas in reference to the prosperity of his people. His youth and earliest ministry being in the midst of the magnificent reign of Uzziah, he had come to regard temporal prosperity and worldly advancement as the things through which God's work was to be carried on. When Uzziah was stricken down and chaos seemed to be coming, and his precon-

ceived ideas seemed shaking, God unveiled before him new truth, and he heard a new word, and he saw that not worldly prosperity but holiness was the avenue of divine favor and blessing. His attitude of obedience before the truth demanded action on his part, and he cried out, "I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips." He put himself where the fire could touch his lips, and then he was ready to answer the divine call, "Here am I; send me." He went forth—not to popularity, but to conflict and trial and toil and sorrow and death.

It was Paul's attitude of obedience which took him so completely out of the old into the new. As he said long afterwards, "Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." It was that attitude of obedience to the truth that paved his pathway with bloody constancy to the day when the heavens opened and the wounded hands put the diadem on his brow.

How this attitude to truth constrained Martin Luther! Take that supreme and awful hour when he stood before the Diet at Worms. Worn by journeyings and vigils and harassing conditions, expecting at any moment the bursting forth of war, or his own death, weak with weariness and watchings, he pronounces his defense, first in German and then at their request in Latin, and then as the official party declared they were not there to discuss things which had been settled by councils long ago, the question was whether he recanted or not, he said: "Well, then, if your Imperial Majesty and your graces require a plain answer, I will give you one of that kind without horns or teeth. It is this, I must be convinced by the witness of the Scriptures or clear arguments, for I do not trust either Pope or councils by themselves. I cannot and will not retract any thing, for to act against conscience is unsafe and unholy. I can do naught else; here I stand. God help me! Amen."

There is an awful necessity upon the man looking into the face of truth.

So with a man today. God speaks from the height of His sanctuary—"Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy." Man asks, "How?" and God answers, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, . . . the blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin." It may be a young man looking toward making the preaching of the gospel his lifework. God shows him clearly that he is to turn men from darkness to light and lead them into the inheritance among those who are sanctified, and he sees that his church will have little or no use for such a ministry. Yet he is to wait in obedience before the truth. I do not know of a church today that in a great pastorate would long endure a man that preached holiness in a way to lead people into the fullness of the blessing, and bring that church into Pentecostal conditions. It is now to be decided by young men whether they will seek culture and eloquence, dealing with ethical and social and educational things, and be popular pastors, or whether they will have the Holy Ghost and the ostracism which that means. And yet to one abiding in obedience to the truth there is but one course.

An awful necessity is upon us. Men and women in church, in business, in social life, meet the Lord by the way; they see the truth of God made luminous by the Holy Spirit. *The way*, the one way, is obedience, with what God permits, and the many mansions.

JUNE 21, 1903

The Three Strands

A Sermon for
Young Men

Setting for the Sermon

It is strange but fitting that in this sermon to youth Dr. Bresee should have most fully expressed the principles which were to guide him in the great venture of his old age. This wrinkled, ancient preacher never failed to inspire the young. The Brotherhood of St. Stephen, organized for the boys, and Company E, founded by Mrs. Lucy P.

Knott for the girls, were in many ways the spiritual shock troops of his church. The suspicion of youth organizations, often attributed to our Nazarene pioneers, did not exist in the West and Northwest. In fact, the story of J. O. McClurkan, E. E. Angell, and C. E. Cornell would not be complete without reference to their appeal to and dependence on the young.

Vision, realism, faith—"the three strands" which Bresee found woven into Isaiah's life—stand for phases of his own spiritual autobiography from the day in 1885 when, as pastor of the First Methodist Church of Los Angeles, he had received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He had set out in the full burst of the "heavenly vision" to make southern California Methodism and its young university a center of holy fire. The reality of the opposition which he encountered as the movement grew, and the exile from his brethren which the decision to build a church for the poor had imposed upon him, threatened but did not destroy the vision. His salvation, as he says here, was "a faith in God, which is dominant and overwhelming." His last years were regnant with the beauty and power of this faith.

The Three Strands

TEXT: *And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel (Isaiah 2:2, 10; 4:2).*

These passages were not written in a day nor a year, but at different times in the life of this great, thoughtful, heaven-inspired patriot, whose working life extended over half a century. They represent the three eras of his life. And these eras enter into every Christian life, are braided like strands into every life that struggles to know and do God's will, toiling in the lifting up of men.

Every young man who hears the divine call, whose enobled aspirations throb with the Spirit of God, is an idealist—an optimist.

VISION

This first utterance of the prophet is not by chance. The first chapter of every earnest young life is a vision

of hope—great results quickly attained. The possibilities of men are seen, a divine impulse thrills him who sees, and he feels it can and must be speedily wrought out.

I cannot say that this vision comes to every young man. It is sadly true that there are so many who never have any really great thoughts, who never feel any great, overmastering impulse to do God's work in the earth. It is one of the sad things, one of the discouraging things, that so many of the boys of all classes are of so little good. Even where there is leisure and opportunity, they add little if anything. They do not seem to want excellence, they do not desire education, they do not covet the opportunity to lay their lives alongside the needs of men. I can scarcely say that they shrink from the struggle to try to make this world better; they scarcely think enough to have any idea of it. They drift. They are formed in mind and character by those as frivolous as themselves, and who are in the same way of uselessness. Their minds are filled with rubbish. They breathe the pestilential air of the clubroom, ballroom, theatre, and billiard halls, and are unfitted for any noble thing.

What a relief to turn from this kind of young man, whose highest ambition is to dance a jig, or ride a bicycle on a Sunday run, or lounge about and smoke a cigar, to a young man who is really of some account in this world! One who listens to the voice of God; who feels that every power and force which he possesses are to help men and bless the world; whose joy it is to lay himself over against the world's evil and to be God's agent to rescue and help the weak and needy; who feels that it is more than happiness, that it is a real foretaste of heaven, to be united with Jesus Christ and all good men to help make this earth to be filled with righteousness—the youthful ardor of such an one is full of hope and expectancy.

Every young disciple is likely to be an optimist. We rejoice in the idealism of the young hero. There is in

it a real glimpse of the possibilities of men. It is light from far-off suns on near mountaintops. It is the dream image of what is to be when the Holy Ghost has builded through toil and labor, sweat, suffering, and blood, when the Cross has lifted man into a new race—the family of God. There is truth and joy and inspiration in it.

It is the vision of the angel in the marble that makes the sculptor hasten to release it. It was the vision of the Colosseum in mid-air that moved Michelangelo to build the dome of St. Peters. It is the vision of the New Jerusalem that girds the Christian patriot to toil on, building after the pattern shown in the mount.

In some parts of the earth, by strange atmospheric conditions a city hundreds of miles away is so photographed and reflected that you see it set down at your very door. That is what occurs in this vision. The mountain of the Lord's house established in the tops of the mountains, exalted above the hills, and all nations flowing into it! That is a true vision. It reflects the possibilities of the race, through the truth and power of God becoming the incarnation of Jesus Christ. It did not die with Isaiah. It flashed out with great distinctness when Jesus said, "Go ye . . . and preach the gospel to every creature." It fell with marvelous beauty upon the mountaintops before the eyes of St. John when he saw the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. It comes to us in surpassing loveliness as we see, by the light of the Holy Ghost, Emmanuel—God with us.

This idealistic period is a necessity for those who are to be workers together with God. Who can build without ideals, or toil without an end, or give life's work in highest devotion without seeing something of the purpose! A slave may toil without thought and without hope, but Jesus says, "I call you not servants . . . but . . . friends"; the mystery of the glory is made known unto you.

Before Nehemiah left the palace at Shushan he saw the rebuilt walls and Jerusalem rescued from desolation. That vision filled his soul. Garibaldi, Mazzini, and Kossuth had visions of liberty which filled their beings. So the young Christian has a vision of the Kingdom, the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven.

The young hero sees the dawning of a new day. He feels, I am connected with it, I can hasten it. Moses as he left the court of Pharaoh doubtless felt, It can be done, I can do it, I will strike; these men will lay down their heavy burdens. John Brown followed in the same way. What confidence there is in this era! I can tell men and they will hear. Idealism is overwhelmed with the possibilities and sees little else. It glows and burns with overmastering intensity and enthusiasm. It is often rash, unwise, and impolitic, but thank God for it; without it men are good for nothing. We must have it, an abiding fact, led, guided by further divine revelation and manifestation—but the fact we must never lose.

REALISM

We soon pass into the realistic; not out of the ideal, I trust. We must carry with us our ideals with all their enthusiasm, or all is lost. Garibaldi never lost sight of liberty. Mazzini never lost sight of Italian unity under great religious principles. Isaiah never quite ceased to see the mountain of the Lord's house established in the tops of the mountains and all nations flowing into it. No Christian is ever to lose sight of the New Jerusalem coming down. A pessimist cannot be a Christian. He has lost sight of hope—the guiding star.

Yet when a man goes to bring about the results he finds difficulties and obstacles everywhere which were not seen in the vision. When Michelangelo turned to attempt to hang the Colosseum in mid-air, it would have

seemed that he had seen the impossible. If you look at Garibaldi wounded almost to the death lying on that South American island, or years afterwards a fugitive on the shores of the Mediterranean, his wife dead in his arms, you would say the vision is a long way off. When Isaiah turned to say to the people, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord's house," he found sin, frivolity, earth-seeking, disloyalty to God everywhere. So little righteousness, so little conscience, so little care! He saw the eyes of the glory of God burning through every rank, and so little but offense to the eyes of His glory. Pride, lifting up of self, self-seeking everywhere! Men given up to gain and women to show, until his heart sank within him.

And is it not always so? You who have had a vision of the possibility of men, and have felt the thrill of heaven in your own soul, you have thought, I can tell them; they will be glad to hear when they see what it does for me; I can get this gospel under men and lift them; I can turn my face toward the darkness and it will flee away. There is fire enough in my bosom to burn up the sins of men.

What have you found? Hardness, frivolousness, self-seeking, rebellion. Few really trying to be right. Men willing to barter every holy thing for gain. We find professedly Christian civilization nursing with tenderest care the vipers that sting the people to the death. When the people of a locality rise up against the great life and home-destroying curse, then the powers of national political life rise up and break the dikes and let the ocean of ungodliness in, as in Iowa, Maine, and Vermont. Every effort is made to turn young men into club life, or social and literary society, where they shall be drowned in worldliness.

Pseudo churches are set up with every attraction of eloquence and music and society, with all kinds of

aesthetic and ethical culture and work, university and college work and life, and all hardened by multiform influences to discard if not to despise the real salvation which the Holy Ghost has brought in Pentecostal power to men. Athens and its Areopagus is set up in the place of Jerusalem and its Pentecost. Pseudo churches without a living Christ in the person of the Holy Ghost, set up to allure the people into their somnambulant chambers, to neglect the great salvation, are probably the most fatal traps set for the feet of men. The intense worldliness, the dethronement of conscience, the allurements and deadly embrace of formality, the chilling influence of a more than semipagan culture, the overwhelming curse of the liquor traffic, debasing the higher, blasting the lower, and stretching out its God-defying hands through all classes to blight and damn, and the general indifference arising from the absence of the manifestation of the Holy Ghost, because of His denial by the professed disciples of Jesus Christ, make things dark.

If the Isaiah of today, as he tries to bring the message, and sees and feels the conditions, cries out; at least for a moment, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" you need not wonder. And yet the vision is not of conditions, but of possibilities through the blood of the Lamb. You need to carry with you into your lifework the vision of the glory which has dawned upon you. The vision is not so much out as up.

FAITH

Isaiah braided into his lifework another strand—faith in God—an all-comprehending, moulding, transforming force, which was really Christliness through faith in God. No man can be a consistent, continuous worker, abiding in the vision, with the conditions which are ever present with him, but through a faith in God which is

dominant and overwhelming. The conditions will blot out the vision, and the barren desert will drink up his spirits. Supreme faith in God alone rises so high above circumstances and difficulties that it abides in the vision.

Isaiah found out that idealism is not a controlling force, that human possibilities will not endue men. He also found that the facts and environments and human results must not and cannot control the worker commissioned of God. He saw a new fact and that fact so entered into his life as to become both all-controlling and all-sustaining. He saw "the branch of the Lord"—the new manifestation of God in this world—and that in connection with this manifestation of God there should be the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning, and that the daughters of Zion should be purified and the blood of Jerusalem washed away, and that the remnant in Jerusalem should be called holy, and that upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion and upon her assemblies should be a cloud of smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night, and that the glory should be a defense. Thus there is a place of safety and victory.

Here are a few facts. The life of God is in men. We breathe the air of heaven down here, like the divers in the ocean's depths. There are shining objects about and waves press on every side, but the air comes fresh out of the blue dome, and the electric cord makes it all light in the deep depths.

The battle is the Lord's. We bear testimony, we strike our blow; the residue of power is with Him. His eyes of glory search through the earth. In His hands are the red-hot thunderbolts that go smiting through society as the iniquity is full. In the meantime the testimony abides, a cloud and smoke by day and a shining, flaming fire by night.

Nothing will do but the burning, purifying fire, the white heat of the indwelling Holy Ghost.

Christlikeness never loses its ideals, never regards as ultimate its surroundings and difficulties. There is but one great, ultimate, all-pervading fact, and that is Christ, the manifest, all-glorious, almighty, abiding Christ. Allied, unified with Him, victory is assured. With Him we walk in the darkness as in the light, in the nighttime as in the day, in the storm as in the calm. We look out upon the most barren desert, the darkest wilderness, into the fiercest tempest as upon the garden of God. Christ calms the storm, makes the wilderness blossom and the deserts bloom.

We bear the world's hope and glory.

The world's Conqueror goes with us.

JUNE 28, 1903

Setting for the Sermon

The Further Vision

Dr. Bresee loved to preach from the prophecy of Isaiah. The only volume he ever published contained his sermons from this book. It is not surprising that he required two Sundays of this summer to complete his message on Isaiah's vision of Christian victory. Here, again, is a call to realism, to purposeful struggle in which success is assured because it is grounded in faith in Christ and the glorious presence of the Holy Spirit. It was a message greatly to be needed in the years ahead. "Getting the glory down" became Dr. Bresee's master solution to every problem the young church faced.

At the evening service on this Sabbath, Dr. Stephen Bowers, head of the Prohibition Party in California and a close friend of the Los Angeles congregation, spoke on "The Fundamental Principles of Government." He announced as his battle cry, "Los Angeles for Prohibition Within Five Years." Dr. Bresee added a few words "out of conscience and loyalty to conviction." He then asked all the men who were voting the Prohibition ticket, and all the women who would if they had a vote, to stand. "Nearly the whole large audience rose up," the account runs, "and as they stood, the choir broke forth with 'Our God Is Marching On.'" The congregation took up the song and "the people waved their handkerchiefs and praised the Lord that God and the right are eternally united."

The Further Vision

TEXT: *In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious. . . . And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning (Isaiah 4:2-4).*

I once ascended a mountain 14,000 feet high. As I stood and looked at it before I made the ascent, I saw it in beautiful outline, forests upon its side, and then its high, bold summit, reaching far above vegetation, standing out against the sky in beautiful relief. But as I toiled up its rugged sides—it was not a tourist mountain—I had other visions. I saw the great rocks which had to be surmounted, rugged, fearful ways hanging over precipices so deep as to make me dizzy. With weariness and finally with sickness I climbed on. There were visions all the way. They were the same that I saw in one great picture when on the plain below, but in climbing, often in my desperation almost hanging over a great precipice, how different! But the mountaintop was still

before me and the blue sky above me, and my feet were to stand upon the summit.

The prophet Isaiah saw the mountain of the Lord's house in the top of the mountains, and the nations flowing into it. But when he began, as the prophet of God, to bring the vision to pass, the difficulties were so great that for a time he was almost overwhelmed. Yet in the midst of the struggle he had visions. It was the same, but, oh, so different! He now saw the upward path step by step, and he saw that those who were going at least for a time were not the great multitude of the "all nations," but a remnant who were climbing up to the mountain's top. The larger vision of the multitude seemed eclipsed.

But he saw some things more clearly. He had a clearer vision of divine manifestation, of the way of ascent, of the path for human feet, and the way of spiritual uplift.

The first and most prominent fact which the prophet now sees is Jesus Christ. He sees a new revelation, a new manifestation of God. This is set forth in very impressive imagery.

"The branch of the Lord." It is the springing forth of Divine Personality upon the earth. He declares that this manifestation is beautiful and glorious. While to veiled eyes He is as a root out of dry ground, yet to open eyes He is "the chiefest among ten thousand" and the One "altogether lovely." Isaiah's eyes were so anointed that he saw that, though He was wounded, bruised, beaten, and dumb before His slayers, yet in His lowly, gentle, humble heart and in His sacrificial sufferings, so freely giving himself, the just for the unjust, is a beauty and glory beyond all description to the sight. That He is Emmanuel, that the government is upon His shoulders, and that His name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." There came upon his vision something of the

bursting forth into this world of the glory of God in His Son, Jesus Christ.

He saw also that the fruit of the earth was to be beautiful, excellent, and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. That the way of Israel's escape is excellent and comely. He clearly indicates that he speaks of the way of holiness. The following verse makes this clear: "He that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy"—shall be holy. This is the excellent and comely way of Israel's escape. Israel conquered, scattered, and peeled. Her deliverance, her escape, her strength, her power is the way of holiness. This excellent way, this which is called by the great apostle "the more excellent way," is the way of holiness. There is a way of complete deliverance, of strength and power, and that is the way of holiness. This is a fact which the blind eyes cannot see and deaf ears cannot hear. But it is still true that holiness becometh the house of the Lord and that the strength of God's people is in himself.

Without holiness and the presence of Him who dwells only in holy hearts the church is soon a conquered church driveling for show; a beggar holding out its dirty hand for the world's pittance; a ballet girl dancing and singing for the world's amusement and pay; or a blind old Samson grinding at the mill, brought out occasionally for the amusement of the Philistines.

God's holy people are neither players for the world's amusement nor caterers to the world's taste. They stand in the height of their resplendent spiritual beauty—the prophets, the messengers of God to men.

Nothing can be more excellent and beautiful than the way God provides for His own. Those who are His own are already blest. Their sins are removed as far as the east is from the west. They are born from above, they are already His own. The way and the inheritance are

most marvelous—freedom from all sin through the blood of the Lamb and inheritance with the Son of God. This way is so glorious that I never wonder when I see one from before whose eyes the veil has been lifted running for the fountain of cleansing. I only wonder that any of us are so blind as not to thus run.

The ideal which the Holy Spirit reveals to Isaiah here is that the real church of God is a remnant of holy people. They that remain in Jerusalem—that are left in Zion—"written among the living," written unto life, are called holy, or are holy. How strong that figure! Every one written unto life. There is no way of life but the way of holiness. No name written unto life but by the way of holiness. We are foreordained unto eternal life through holiness, and are made partakers of the divine nature through sanctification of the Spirit. The New Testament corroborates this strong statement—"Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Isaiah deals also with methods and results. There is the washing away of the filth of the daughters of Zion and the purging the blood of Jerusalem. Isaiah saw that this remnant—those who abide in Jerusalem, written unto life—are holy through the cleansing away of their filth and the purging of their very being from iniquity, and he tells us how it is to be accomplished. "By the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." God's people are made holy by His own judicial act. He is faithful and just, when there is the proper confession, to forgive sins and to cleanse from all unrighteousness. It is the act of God and is judicially done for and to every man.

The forgiveness of sins is a special divine act in the court of heaven. The eyes of the Lord search through the case, and God himself gives judgment that the conditions are met, and for the sake of His Son, He forgives all of a man's sins. And the judicial act of forgiveness is attended by the divine act of washing away of the filth

of human sins. The festering corruption of our own sins washed away; though they be as crimson, they are made white as snow! This is the imperial act of God. This is the measureless act of His power, wisdom, and love, all concentrating in and finding expression through the sacrifice of His Son. So we see here the spirit of judgment.

But this is not the end of the judicial work. The prince of this world is also judged, The prince of this world still lays claim to a part of the nature of this forgiven and in some sense cleansed soul. There is in this soul, though his own sins are cleansed, an inheritance of sin. In the Scriptures it is termed "the carnal mind," "the old man," "the body of sin," "the sin that doth so easily beset." That there remains in the soul after conversion the inherited sinful conditions is clearly taught in the Bible. That man needs after conversion a further purging from this inherited sin is urged in the Word of God.

This somewhat of sin in the converted man is of Satan, and is controlled by him. The carnal mind "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," for it "is enmity against God." Satan owns, possesses, and controls carnality. So that the new life of God and carnality cannot long dwell in the same soul. Carnality is dominated by the new life, but it is in constant rebellion, and Satan largely makes carnality his field of battle. There is no difference in reference to these facts among the churches or in the history of Christian doctrine that amounts to anything. In reference to this further work of grace—virtually all churches agreeing as to its necessity—they do not agree on the how and when.

It seems to me very clear that the Pauline method, so clearly and strongly emphasized by John Wesley, is that carnality, which is "the sin of the world," is dealt with in a way similar to the way our individual sins were dealt with. Christ gave himself to sanctify and cleanse the church, that it might be holy. In response to human

need and faith, another judicial act is done, and Satan—the prince of this world—is judged in regard to his property in man and is debarred, and his property in man is confiscated and destroyed. And this destruction is accomplished by God's method of a deeper cleansing or purging, which is by fire. Isaiah saw it was done by the Spirit of burning. It is the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

So Isaiah had here, in vision, the names written unto life through washing and judgment and purging through fire. It is so today, the judicial act of God and the cleansing and purging by His power. This "new doctrine," so called, is the old doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and the fathers.

There are a few things which result from this condition which God creates in connection with His holy people that I call attention to:

First, God creates "upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night." That is a continued new creation. "The Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence." The testimony of holy people is the continued breath of God. The uprising of a human soul in devotion or testimony would be nothing or next to nothing, but when God breathes through the soul His own Spirit, He creates a cloud upon that spirit, a bright, snowy, golden cloud, and a pillar of smoke that tells the world that here is one of His own.

And so also upon the assemblies of Zion. There the cloud of glory rests, there the smoke of holy incense rises. The assemblies of God's holy people are different from all other gatherings. Perhaps not in the place they gather, not so much that the people are dressed differently, not altogether that they seem to do so differently.

They are different in that there walks among them One like unto the Son of God, and that their hearts burn within them as He talks to them, and the cloud of incense rises and the smoke of testimony ascends. And when the earth grows dark, there is one place all luminous, and that is about the assembly of holy people, for God creates upon them the flaming fire.

And the glory is their defense. There is one kind of people that nothing can really harm, those covered with the divine glory.

JULY 26, 1903

Setting for the Sermon

**To
Know
Him**

Throughout July, the *Nazarene Messenger* was crowded with reports of the growth and extension of the work across the country. The D. Rand Pierces had arrived in Boise. Mrs. DeLance Wallace wrote that a church had been organized in Garfield, Washington. C. W. Ruth described a glorious revival at the Methodist church in North Harvey, Illinois, in which all of the official board professed the grace of sanctification, provoking the pastor to resign. I. G. Martin was making plans for the First Annual Utah State Holiness Association Camp Meeting. The church at Berkeley was in a flourishing spiritual condition, especially the young people's meetings. The South Pasadena, Ocean Park, Mateo Street, and Sawtelle congregations, all located around Los Angeles, enjoyed continuous victory with seekers regularly at the altar.

Dr. Bresee preached on such subjects as "The Old-time Religion" (*Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths*), "The Personal Joy of Jesus," and "The Consuming Fire." Every Tuesday he gave a Bible reading to the Holiness Meeting, and exhorted the flock at prayer meeting on Wednesday nights. Preachers of several denominations were guest speakers on Sunday evenings.

The last Sabbath of the month, Dr. Bresee delivered the message below. It relates knowledge and being in a manner foreshadowing some of the best of modern philosophy. And it magnified as well the "fellowship with his sufferings," which the easy optimism of those times had nearly banished from evangelical religion. Here again is the Christian life in all its maturing splendor, not just a crisis of experience. But the baptism of the Holy Ghost was the gateway to it all.

To Know Him

TEXT: *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead (Philippians 3: 10-11).*

From the day that Saul of Tarsus looked upon Jesus Christ, when on his way to Damascus, to the day when he laid down his life for Him, his gaze was never diverted. To know Him, to be like Him, to glorify Him was the passion of his soul.

I can scarcely say that Saul of Tarsus had religion; religion had Him. The arms of Infinite Love embraced him and pressed his willing heart up to God. Anything else which came into his life was not only secondary but so far secondary that it was lost in the distance. Christ was All in All to him. His passionate cry in reference to His service was, "This one thing I do."

He had scarcely known whether earthly things were bright or dim since he saw that face which was brighter than the noonday sun. Palaces or prisons, freedom or bondage, ease or suffering, riches or poverty had been the merest incidents. There was such greatness in the

possession of the presence of the King that these incidents were of the smallest moment. To live was Christ; to die was to be with Him forever.

The earthly shadows were gathering closely about him. The two years in his own hired house, receiving all who came and preaching Christ to them, were past. Closer confinement within the barracks of the Praetorian guards was upon him. The prospects of speedy release had faded out into the prospects of speedy death. But this only intensifies the expressions of longing for his divine Master.

He peculiarly loved the church at Philippi, and pours out his soul to them in this Epistle, in utterances of deepest affection. He also uncovers to them the depth of his heart's longing Christward. This text is a single utterance from that passionate heart. "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."

Here is a man of clear vision, of sound judgment, having a proper estimate of things. Let us push our hearts up close to him this morning.

The outgoing of his soul is to know and to be. To know a truth and to be it, or to be in the way of being it, were all one to this man. To know a great truth and be indifferent to it was to him an unknown thing. He was genuine. To know a truth affecting being and destiny and be indifferent to it is to be a counterfeit on manhood. A man who has to be ever urged to be in accord with the truth he knows has not the true ring.

This man was not only loyal to the truth he knew, but longed to know all truth that he might be loyal to it. From earliest boyhood he was a student, seeking to know, and feeling after the truth. But when God touched him on the slopes of Mount Hermon, he found a fountain of truth that absorbed and overwhelmed him. Into it he poured his life, and from it his life was filled. The passion which he now breathes forth has been the passion of his

soul all these years, only it grows more intense as the days go by.

To know. Oh, yes! we do not wonder that this man cried "to know." That is the passion of every great mind. Paul's father took great care in his education. Inspired by the sight of the large gathering of students in the great university at Tarsus, he was not permitted to drink at the fountains of pagan culture. He was sent to Jerusalem, to the sacred college presided over by one of the greatest of Jewish teachers, Gamaliel. The sacred Scriptures and the traditions of Israel should be the fountains of his knowledge. If the philosophy and poetry of the Greeks and Romans were to be learned, they should come through channels of intellectuality which knew the greatness of Hebrew literature. He was carefully taught and broadly cultured, with greatest care that he should be properly adjusted to knowledge.

But he was reconstructed in this particular on his way to Damascus. He received new truth and new adjustments to truth, which made him what he was. He learned truth of more value, in half an hour, than all that Gamaliel ever uttered. But he got an attitude toward truth—the truth—which opened before him infinite things.

It is of much more value to a young man that he be converted to God, that he begin to see the great truths of being and destiny clearly, and get the right attitude toward the thoughts which are higher than our thoughts, than all other education. God will do more for a young man in one hour than the best university can do for him in ten years. Not only the revelation of himself to a human heart, but the placing of the soul in a proper attitude towards himself, the fountain of truth.

So Paul, speaking of the attitude of his soul, and of the great experience of his life which had come to him and for which he longed, says:

"That I may know him." This means something more than discovery. Something more than the bursting forth of His presence in manifestation, even such as he saw on his way to Damascus. That was wonderful and glorious. It convinced him. Through it he was reconciled to God, yielding himself in obedience to the heavenly vision. There was a sense in which he came to know Him in that hour, but knowing Him thus, he longed to know Him in closest unity and fellowship. It is the further knowledge of Christ to which he refers. It is the longing of a heart who has seen His face and heard His voice.

This statement is autobiographic. It tells of his experience in the past, how he longed; and he also tells us of the way he sought and found, how he was enabled to know Christ more profoundly; but it is a present passion as well. To know Christ is to be filled with unutterable longing to know Him more and more.

What is it to know Christ? Not in discovery, not simply that He has opened the way of reconciliation to God, and that through Him we have forgiveness of sins. All that is blessed, but it is only introductory.

"To know him." Real knowledge of personality, at least the best knowledge of personality, comes from association, fellowship. That Jesus Christ is revealed to obedient hearts, I do not wait to argue. He who through the revelation of God by the Spirit has discovered the Christ, and taken his cross to follow Him, will find in and through the Word, by the Spirit, revelations and manifestations of his Lord to his own soul.

What does it mean to know Him? It means a deeper knowledge of self. As we begin to know Jesus and hunger after Him, the way of His manifestation is to show us our lack of conformity to himself. When Isaiah saw the Lord and would look to see Him more perfectly, instead of seeing Him, he saw Isaiah: his own spiritual defile-

ment and impurity, and he became lost to everything else but his own need. It was in meeting that need that the Lord opened up the way for the deeper communion and fellowship. To know Him is to have His face of light shine down through our being and show us all things that hinder fullest fellowship with himself.

To know Him, the apostle said, he was made conformable unto His death. What was the purpose of the death of Jesus Christ? No question pertaining to the salvation of a human soul, whether Paul's or ours, is more momentous than this. The purpose of the death of Christ is to destroy sin, to make sinners saints, and thus open up to them the fountain of life. His death paid the penalty of our sins and made provision for the cleansing away of their moral turpitude. Also for the sin of the world, the unrighteous condition of man as man. That which is in a man when all his sins are forgiven him, and he begins with a clean, white sheet, that which would push him again into evil. This was the great fact which so impressed John the Baptist that it seemed to swallow up all other facts, as he cried, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." No man is made conformable unto the death of Jesus Christ until the sin of the world is taken away from him.

Paul goes into some details to let us know the way this was brought about with him. He tells us that he so desired to know Jesus Christ, to have a pre-eminent knowledge of Him, to be made conformable unto His death, that it became the one thing for which he gladly sacrificed everything else—the things that were gain unto him; that for it he suffered the loss of all things; not, however, with any sense of sacrifice—he counted them as dung. No one reaches this goal but by the same road. We are made conformable unto His death by a desire for a knowledge of Jesus so great that every earthly aim and possession and possibility is put away as utterly

valueless. The shallowness of your religion begins with your desire that your sacrifice be as little as possible.

Paul saw the glory of a pre-eminent knowledge of Jesus Christ, and he did not count the cost. Reputation, wealth, friends, his church standing, his ecclesiastical position, all went in. He did not wait to reckon or count. All together, he declared, it is utterly valueless as he cast it down by the altar of God.

He also put off his own righteousness. The one great, struggling effort of his life was to be righteous. But his impure heart made every effort as a filthy rag. As he saw Jesus and His merit, and the possible imputation and impartation to him of His righteousness, he put all the filthy rags off and trusted alone in Him, to have the righteousness of God. Thus the great purpose of the death of Jesus to destroy sin was accomplished, and he was made conformable unto His death. This was the preparation to know Him. He mentions two particulars of the experience of this pre-eminent knowledge of Jesus Christ. They are the outflows of this knowledge as virtue was the outflow of the touch of His garment.

First—the power of His resurrection. The power of the resurrection of Jesus is the baptism with the Holy Ghost. On the Day of Pentecost the place was shaken, the tongues of flame rested upon every one, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Men thought them drunk, and Peter had shown them the contrary, how that the Son of God had been revealed and walked in incarnation, and this Jesus Christ had been crucified and how He had come forth from the grave. Then he pronounced that mightiest “therefore”: By this coming of the Holy Ghost let the house of Israel know assuredly that Jesus is Lord and Christ. The evidence, the manifest power of the Resurrection, is the baptism with the Holy Ghost, which is not simply the momentary blessing

of cleansing, but "the blessing of Christ," the abiding Spirit to reveal Christ in a human soul.

The power of the resurrection of Christ is the resident power of the Spirit. The Holy Ghost resident in man is God's dynamite in the soul.

The great manifestation of God's power in this world is unto salvation, and its method is by the way of the dynamite of the Holy Ghost in human souls.

Paul's great desire was that in and through him there might be the manifestation of the power of God to save.

He wanted to know—to pre-eminently know—Jesus Christ in this manifestation. This is the "mystery" about which his Epistles so gather, for the fullness and glory of which he so longs and prays, and so presses upon the whole church. He urges the church to pray that he may be able to make known this "mystery." And he prays that the church may be thus "strengthened with might . . . in the inner man."

Christ in the heart, revealed by the Spirit. The risen, living Christ, revealed by the Holy Ghost in the heart, is the resurrection power of which the apostle speaks. This is the power of the church in this dispensation. If Christ be not alive our preaching is vain. And if He is not manifest by the Holy Ghost as far as the gospel being made effective He might as well be dead. The reason that His resurrection life gives it power is because He is present as the Holy Ghost, to make it mighty. We are to know the power of His resurrection.

The apostle's heart went out for another result in himself, of knowing Him. *That he might know the fellowship of His sufferings.*

I have studied, with such critical care as I am capable of, this deep heart cry of longing as set forth by the apostle, as one of the very crowning experiences for which he had prayed, and I confess to overwhelming awe

in the presence of this soul cry of this disciple of Jesus Christ. It was not for peace—even the peace of God. It was not for joy—even the joy of the Lord. It was not for comfort—even being comforted by His presence. It was for the fellowship of His sufferings.

This indicates, as taught in so many other places, that the suffering relation to Christ was the coveted place, the place of greatest glory. Paul stated the privilege when he said, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." And Peter said, "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." When Peter and John had been beaten by the council and let go, they rejoiced "that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." To suffer for Christ is to suffer with Christ and be a partaker of His sufferings and means the greatest things for him who suffers.

But Paul's deepest heart cry was for fellowship with His sufferings. This word fellowship has the deepest meaning. To know the fellowship of the sufferings of Jesus Christ is to be in soul united with Him in His passion for dying men. Not for the reward, not for the glory, but in very nature united with the infinite passion to lift men from the jaws of hell and save from the power of sin.

How little, how contemptible much of our religion, with its little efforts just for its sweetmeats, looks in the presence of this experience of the apostle! Let us cast it overboard this morning, and flee to the wounds of Jesus, and pray for some conception of this divine life to which we have come.

AUGUST 9, 1903

The Atmosphere of the Divine Presence

Setting for the Sermon

An editorial which Dr. Bresee wrote the week he preached this sermon entitled "No Hope" reveals some of its background. He told of the numerous letters he was receiving from "ministers who have been long in the service, trying to preach and lead the people into the experience of holiness, who have become fully convinced that the tides of influence are so strong against them that it is useless, under the conditions, to prolong the struggle." They had come to this conclusion, Bresee said, with such sorrow and agony as opponents of the doctrine could scarcely understand.

For, he said, "when a man's life is largely spent, and he sees that though rowing with all his might the current is swifter than his strength . . . there comes a crisis to that man which means more than can be told. . . . The church of today is making it impossible for people who have really come into the fullness of the blessing of Christ, to remain in it."

In the previous editorials in the *Messenger*, Bresee had commented on Joseph H. Smith's recent "Open Letter" to the members of the National Holiness Association, in which these issues were underlined. Smith, who remained until his death a champion of interdenominational co-operation in the holiness movement, warned against the drift of its leaders toward church organization. True, he noted, the Methodist church seemed increasingly to force the work into independent camp meetings, conventions, and publishing ventures, and then denounce ministers who worked in such channels. But a holiness church, Smith warned, was not the answer. Bresee's success in Los Angeles could not be duplicated elsewhere. The solution was to create an interdenominational fellowship strong enough to carry the revival onward.

Dr. Bresee heartily sympathized with all who suffered from these dilemmas. His Nazarene press, in fact, printed Smith's paper. But he had long since committed himself to the testings of persecution which founding a new church involved. And, as this sermon shows, he thought he had found the secret to dwelling amidst "devouring fire." He was speaking, here, to a national audience. But he was preaching also to the people in First Church.

The Atmosphere of the Divine Presence

TEXT: *Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? (Isaiah 33:14)*

Every man of convictions has a few fundamental truths. They enter into all his thinking, they pervade all his reasoning, they largely shape all of his conclusions.

It is difficult for many people to realize what it is to so see a great truth that it enters into the being and becomes a conviction.

When a man who has so seen a great truth, and it has become a conviction, a controlling fact in his life, and speaks of it, tries to tell the vision to men, they are likely to regard what he says as mere rhetoric.

Isaiah had two or three fundamental truths which entered into all his life and all his marvelous utterances.

One was the all-pervading presence of God—God with us. A part of this thought was that human life is in this Divine Presence. Not in the presence of God, but in God. It is the same that Paul saw when he said, "In him we live, and move, and have our being." To the clear vision of Isaiah, God's continued abiding presence in this world was as fire in a burning building or city. As the

author of the Hebrews says, "Our God is a consuming fire."

For forty years Isaiah had been preaching this "God with us" gospel to this people. But their eyes were blinded and their ears heavy. Notwithstanding this, the strong faith and the clear voice of the prophet never failed. One night the fire of His presence touched the Assyrian army, and it was destroyed, and the people were awakened. Each sinner saw that there was something in him that could burn, and it did not matter in this presence which side of the wall people were on, that this presence would burn on both sides of the wall. In their conviction they cried out, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

Rev. George Adam Smith, writing upon this text, says: "We shall understand the difference between Isaiah and his people, if we have ever, for our eyes' sake, looked at a great conflagration through a colored glass, which allowed us to see the solid materials—stone, wood and iron—but prevented us from perceiving the flames and shimmering heat. To look thus, to see pillars, lintels and crossbeams twist and fall, crumble and fade; how inexplicable the process seems! Take away the glass and everything is clear. The fiery element is filling all the interstices that were blank to us before, and beating upon the solid material. The heat becomes visible, shimmering even where there is no flame. Just so it had been with the sinners in Judah these forty years. Their society and politics, individual fortunes and careers, personal and national habits of life—the home, the church, the state—common outlines and shapes of life—were patent to every eye, but no man could explain the constant decay and diminution, because all were looking at life with open vision, which filled up for him the interstices of experience, and gave terrible explanation to fate. It was a vision

that nearly scorched the eyes out of him. Life, as he saw it, was steeped in flame—the glowing righteousness of God. Jerusalem was full of the spirit of justice, the spirit of burning.”

This is what we need to see—that God pervades and envelops all human life. That God is the element in which we live, and that all things must be adjusted to Him.

Isaiah does not preach fire in the world to come very much. Not what is called hell fire; but he preaches fire here, now, to which human life and destiny are conformed. This atmosphere we cannot escape; though “I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me” (Psalms 139:9-10).

“God with us” to Isaiah meant, and to us means, love and salvation; also holiness with judgment. It meant the jealousy of God, breathing upon what is impure, false, and proud. Either that which is sinful and impure will be burned away leaving the man adjusted to the Divine Presence, where he grows and flourishes, and rejoices, and is glorified, or, becoming evil, the fire burns his very being.

Isaiah’s figure for human life is an atmosphere of fire. Ours in modern parlance is “the struggle for existence.” Some go down and some abide, some succeed and some fail, and it is said the battle was hard. There is a struggle, but the results are far more differentiated by the atmosphere than by the struggle. Whether we are at harmony with God has more to do with the outcome than all relations of our fellows or society. Nothing but holiness of personality can abide.

The righteousness and the judgments of God are upon us. His presence pervades everything, differentiates everything. Cities, nations, governments, full of iniquity, go down at last, like the beams and plates and pillars of

a great house filled with flame. Assyria and Egypt, Greece and the Roman Empire, Babylon, Nineveh, Jerusalem, Athens and Rome, Sodom and Gomorrah, Tyre and Sidon, Capernaum and Ephesus have collapsed. Modern nations and cities and civilizations are in the flame. Anyone whose eyes are opened can see the twistings of the great girders, and yielding of the great beams here and there. Macauley's picture of the New Zealander, standing on some ruin of London Bridge and querying about the people who once made the ruins about him a great city, is more than a fancy sketch.

This is true in individual life. The fire of the Divine Presence so burns about every human being that it almost scorches the eyes to look continuously at human life. Men gather of the things of this world, spend their strength and time and energies, really pour themselves into accumulations, only to add to the fire that consumes them. As Isaiah prophesied of the Assyrian kings and their colossal gatherings and creations, "The pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." No wonder as the veil was lifted and the people saw the real truth that they cried, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

To whom shall the Divine Presence be life and glory and power? Who, like the burning bush, shall glow and burn and shine and abide forever? Who?

This the prophet proceeds to answer. Had the light of this new dispensation been upon the people so they could have understood, he could have said, "The Blood-washed soul, in whom the divine Christ dwells, working out all His own precious life." His answer, couched in forms of utterance possible at that time, means the same as this.

First, there is righteousness. "He that walketh righteously," or as the margin has it, "in righteousness."

No man can walk in righteousness unless he has it. No one has any righteousness of his own—at least, it is as filthy rags and not fit to walk in. The breath of God sweeps every pretense of righteousness away. There must be the work of righteousness done for us, and the work of righteousness done in us, and the work of righteousness done through us.

All his activities and all his utterances are in righteousness. He despiseth the gains of oppressions—frauds. That stands for everything dishonest and unreal. Manifest not only by not holding it in his hands, but by the shaking of his hands.

The avenues of his soul are stopped against evil. He “stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.” That is the supreme strength of the indwelling Christ, which makes the new creation so much stronger than the first Adam. The avenues of the souls of the first pair were open; they saw, desired, fell. Isaiah brings this out in another place when he says, “Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord’s servant? Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not.”

He shall not only stand, but “he shall dwell on high.”

His defense “shall be the munitions of rocks.”

His needs are supplied. “Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.”

He “shall see the king in his beauty” and “the land that is very far off,” or a far-stretching land.