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THE ART OF KEEPING ALIVE

THE EDITOR

IT IS difficult to define a "live church" in words, but we all know when we meet one, and we all wish we could produce and maintain one. We wish it so much that we may be tempted to substitute shallow enthusiasm and noise for that deep-flowing reality which we have seen somewhere or concerning which we have dreamed. But things have the habit of costing more if they are worth more, and this applies to spiritual matters quite as much as to economical.

The casual observer and light thinker is likely to classify dead churches as those which make use of the ritual in their services. But then he faces the immediate difficulty of being unable to present all nonritualistic churches as live churches. And if a church is dead it can cover its deadness with a ritual; whereas, the nonritualistic dead church is as gruesome as a corpse not enshathed in a casket. But the classification is not correct any way. For while it is likely that the great majority of churches which make use of the ritual in their services are formal, there are so many which follow no order at all which are dead that the mention of the ritual largely loses meaning. I do not care to argue the case either pro or con, but I may assert that I personally believe there is something of a middle ground, and that a moderate use of the ritual helps rather than hinders in the exercise of the functions of life in a church.

Of course the beginnings of life are in the new birth in the preacher and in the church, and we need say no more than that preachers raise up churches, rather than churches raise up preachers, to locate the prime responsibility. The preacher in the pulpit and the members in the pew must be "twice born" people if the church is to be a live church.

But it was not our thought to discuss things which are quite so fundamental. We would approach our subject by saying we think it often happens that the preacher and the members started as twice born people and yet were unsuccessful in the attempt to develop a live church. It is a paradox that a

preacher who is personally alive may pastor members who are personally alive and between them they may maintain a church that is dead. This does not mean that dead people may maintain a live church, for, after all, there are many rules that won't "work both ways."

John Wesley found three things necessary to the maintenance of a spiritual church: first, the people must have definite, personal spiritual awakening and induction into the knowledge of God. Second, they must be indoctrinated. And, third, there must be adequate and adapted means for the people to express their spiritual vitality in words and deeds.

Now the first factor needs no emphasis or enlargement—we are all sure on that point. But the second factor is a more exacting matter. How shall the preacher indoctrinate the people? An occasional "doctrinal sermon" may help, but it is not sufficient. There must be found a way to permeate the very atmosphere with the fundamental theses of the Christian faith. There must be no necessity for maintaining "attachments" for doctrinal construction. Doctrine must be inherent in the warp and woof of the whole fabric of the church so that its place as an essential can never be disputed. Sermons on detached morality and on natural immortality and on life as unrelated to Christ are detrimental in that they train the people to think like pagans and make Christian thought unnatural. No matter what the occasion, the preacher must determine to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Preaching in the spirit of debate and speculation makes no contribution to the establishment of the people in the doctrines of God. The preacher may wisely avoid fields in which his own thinking is immature, but the things which are everywhere and all the time believed among us must be preached always and preached as they are in truth, revelations of God. Some who testify that they have been sanctified wholly and hold that they are "holiness preachers" seldom get people into the blessing, and a study of their methods often shows a fault in the manner of holding and presenting. If holiness is to the preacher "a thing apart," he will scarcely make it an indispensable to the people, no matter how vehemently he may make his occasional trials.

But the third member of the Wesleyan triad is perhaps for us the one most difficult to practice. I have heard a preacher boast that he did not "hold" the meeting, but simply "turned it loose." Well, as a reference to some particular service this method is fine. But as a regular custom it is a failure. I have been attending and taking part in "people's meetings" now for more than thirty years, and I think I have never been any where yet that there was not at least one or two persons who will take advantage of a "free" meeting to talk or rant and to turn liberty into license. Old Brother Ballard used to sit in the meeting during some long recital of details concerning an experience more or less recent, and when the ordeal was finished, he would perk up right lively and in a tired voice call out, "Come on now children, some of the rest of you drag it a while." But perhaps the average preacher would not dare be quite as drab as that. However, someone must "have charge" of the meetings and must direct them or they will deteriorate and people will quit attending. I speak here from observation and not from mere theory. Of course Thomas Jefferson was right when he

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said, "That government governs best which governs least." And that leadership of the public service which is least felt is best. Still there must be the realization that each one is safe only while he is reasonable and right. But how can a preacher direct his meetings, including the people's meetings, without overdirecting them? This is where the requirement for art comes in. Then there is the singing. Special singing, choir singing, and what not has taken a large part of this service from the people. But it still remains that a live church is always a singing church. There must be wise selection of songs and hymns and there must be direction without dictation. The people must be taught to sing and they must be led in singing. Then there is the grace of giving. I suppose every preacher has wished he was rich so he could preach and support himself. But this is not God's plan and it has never worked. A preacher works better who must live materially, as well as spiritually, on the fruit of his labors. And besides that, no church can be a live church that is not also a giving church. And here I speak of money in particular—no mystifying of the proposition is intended. There must always be a program of appealing proportions, and there must always be a plan that is workable and this is constantly worked. Perhaps every preacher and every church has dreamed of a situation in which the work would all be taken care of without anyone doing anything extraordinary. But the genius of the Church is and always has been the sacrifice of God's people. To keep the budgets at a point that will require everyone's best, and yet where they can be reached when everyone does his best is the ideal for the live and living church. And even the best plan, the most scriptural plan must be guarded that it become not the tomb of spontaneous liberality.

Well, I have been talking pretty much in general terms, and perhaps I should not come to specific rules of thumb. So I will close by saying once more that keeping alive is an art, and by adding that it is an art that requires constant practice and continual experimenting. If any preacher thinks he has found the art for maintaining a live church, let him continue his program for at least a half a generation and by then he will no doubt adopt many revisions.

Dr. T. R. Glover, in his book on Paul of Tarsus, observes that Paul required everything to square with Christ before he passed upon its value. He was not carried away with Episcopalianism, sacerdotalism, tongues, visions, or any other thing *per se*. He asked, "Is it essential in bringing us to Christ? Is it according to the mind of Christ? Will it help win others to Christ? Will it cause us to know Christ more fully?" And when these questions were answered, Paul's position was known, for his touchstone was, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." Now and then Paul expressed his near prejudice either for or against a matter. But his method of testing everything finally by the mind of Christ saved him from error and caused him to drive down a narrow road as remarkable for its sanity as for its righteousness and piety. Dr. Glover does not exhort, but this seems to be a good time for the exercise of that special gift.

Dr. Glover says, "The view that Hinduism has contributions to make to the religion of Jesus is modern, and due to confusion of thought. Indians may very well illumine Christ for us, but idolatry and Hinduism are on a different footing in grammar and in fact."

DEVOTIONAL

THE SOURCE OF REAL BLESSEDNESS

A. M. HILLS

(Matt. 5:3-12)

THE first word of the greatest sermon ever preached, by the greatest preacher that ever lived, was "blessed!" Jesus looked upon a poverty stricken, restless, dissatisfied mass of people, all seeking by some means or other, self-gratification, happiness. But He, with His deeper knowledge and more spiritual insight, opened his mouth and taught them a better way—not how to be *happy*, but how to be "*blessed*."

There is a difference between happiness and blessedness. Happiness is the delight that comes to you from the things that happen to you from without. Blessedness is the bliss that wells up from the artesian fountain of joy in the depths of your own soul. An illustration will make it plain:

Paul and Silas had a festival in Philippi and cast the evil spirit out of an enslaved fortune-telling damsel. Her master raised a riot, and had Paul and Silas cruelly beaten with many stripes, and their feet were made fast in the stocks. Their backs were gashed and bleeding. They could not stand up; they could not lie down. They could not sit down without excruciating pain. There was not much happiness in such a situation. But the blessedness of holiness and the conscious presence of God thrilled their hearts and made them chant their praises till heaven heard; and to the soprano of human voices was added the diapason of an earthquake and the old prison walls rocked, and heavenly joys overflowed right there.

Yes, health and wealth and physical delights, and cards and dancing, and games and races and folly can make people thrill with happiness; but it takes holy character and God to awaken in the soul the *blessedness* of heaven.

The infallible Son of God made no mistake. He knew what blessedness was, for He had known it for myriads of ages, in the bosom of the Father. And He also knew the divine order of the steps that led to it, the royal highway to bliss.

1. *Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* In other words, blessed is the individual Christian who longs for a higher life than he is at present living. Blessed is he who has been aroused by the Holy Spirit to a solemn consciousness that he is living below the gospel standard of piety, and does not measure up "to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Blessed is the woman who suddenly becomes aware that her religion is a mere matter of rites and forms and ceremonies, of attending services, and having your name on the church roll, and filling an office in the Ladies Aid Society.

I was once leading a revival in a southern city. After the sermon the leading lady and social queen of the town and wife of the leading citizen of the place rose and astonished everyone by saying, "You all know me, that I have been a member of this church for years and my outward life has been above reproach. But in this service I have waked up to the fact that I have not had a distinct smile from my Savior's face in ten years, and I am determined to live so no longer." She broke for the altar. Her husband followed her, and many more. A great revival swept the place. The consciousness of her poverty of spirit was the first step to *blessedness* in many lives. No one will ever seek and pay the price for a clean heart as long as they feel quite comfortable and satisfied to be without it.

2. *Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.* After explaining the doctrine of sanctification for several days in a revival in Wisconsin, I ventured to make an altar call for sanctification, and twenty-three came forward, and sought and obtained the blessing. As we were going out, one mother who had been a Christian a score of years said to me, "How can God ever forgive the failures and shortcomings of my past Christian life?"

I felt that in my own soul. I preached twenty-three years with only limited success, comparatively speaking, never in all that time seeing one

person baptized with the Holy Spirit. While I was widely known as a revival and soul winning preacher, yet, when the truth of full salvation broke in on my mind, I mourned indeed, and prayed that the blood of Jesus Christ might wash out the guilt of my unworthy ministry! O the cruel affront to the Holy Spirit, which even ministers offer Him by keeping Him out of their hearts so long. (Remember, Jesus does not refer to all kinds of mourners, but to those who mourn over depravity of heart, and the principle of sin.)

3. *Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.* The mourning over alienation of heart from God will produce a sense of littleness and unworthiness and unfitness for fellowship with the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity. It will bring one into the dust of humility. You will long to be rid of that which makes you unlike the Lord you hope to dwell with forever. Thus you reach lowliness, humility, self-abasement. And when the strut and swell and pride are all gone, God can bless you with large things without spoiling you.

An exceptionally able young preacher wrote to John Fletcher and asked, "Dear sir, what can I do to be a very useful minister of the gospel?" John Fletcher wrote back, "If you will get to feel that you are the littlest man in England then God can use you." When in our own eyes we are the humblest and least deserving of all, then the gift of the earth would not unduly exalt us.

4. *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.* Here are the most intense cravings of the physical being used as a figure to represent the deep longings of the soul for holiness. When anyone gets in this state of mind, he is getting very close to the pentecostal blessing. The world and its prizes shrivel into the veriest baubles of empty nothingness. What sinners and worldlings eagerly seek after he scorns; he cries for God; he wants to be like Jesus. "More like Jesus would I be, more of His love who died for me."

But one does not get into this frame of mind from the mountain-tops of popularity and publicity, en rapport with the world of fashion and applause. From the depths of a well one can see the stars at midday but not from the glitter and glare of the mountain-top. So from the lowly vale of self-abasement and spiritual humility you get a glimpse of heaven, and begin to feel the

unutterable longings for the fulness of God. "And giving does not impoverish Him; nor withholding enrich." He loves to give, and has enough to satisfy all.

5. *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.* He is so conscious of his own shortcomings and frailties, that he is gracious and pitying and sympathetic toward the failures of others, which is very like the forgiving spirit of the Master himself. Mercy is the exercise of benevolence toward the unfortunate and guilty. When Christians get there they will be tender and thoughtful, and have the spirit of forgiveness toward everybody, willing to overlook other people's faults and infirmities, and especially see their own. Then, after that state of heart is reached, but not before, God gives a great promise: "For they shall obtain mercy."

This fifth beatitude opens the door of heaven's mercy wide open. A very river of divine grace pours forth.

"O the love of God! Broad as the ocean; deep as the sea! It avails for all men. It avails for me!"

6. *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.* Sanctified at last! Here is a character which God's Spirit only can produce, that Spirit that was so wondrously poured out at Pentecost; and so many, many times since! "Cleansing their hearts by faith" then (Acts 15:8, 9). And doing the same now.

"But," someone says, "I don't understand sanctification." No; and you did not understand "regeneration" until you were regenerated; and then you did not understand all the mysteries about the Spirit's work. Just so the rejecters of sanctification do not understand it, and will not understand it until they get it.

I preached twenty-three years supposing that one grew into it. But I didn't grow into it, and I discovered that nobody else did. On a more careful study of the Holy Word I learned that, on complying with certain clearly defined conditions, we obtained sanctification *instantaneously by faith*. Then I went to work diligently to comply with the prescribed conditions. I found to my joy that blessedness that the Holy Spirit did not deceive or disappoint us. "Even when complete, it may in this world, coexist with many an error of judgment and defect of temperament. Yet it enables us to live without offending God, so as to maintain for us the permanent fulness of the di-

vine approbation. And when the heart is clean the eye is clear to see God in every providence of life."—WHEBON.

7. *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*" The moment your heart is made pure it is full of peace. And wherever you go you will carry such a deep restfulness and quietness that you will commend it, and recommend it and spread it abroad.

Now there comes a turn of affairs. Up till now nobody objected to your religion. You could feel as lean as a skeleton and mourn your heart out, and be as meek and unassuming as a snail and nobody will care. You may even hunger and thirst for God and godlikeness in your secret closet devotions, and no one will go out of his way to molest you. If you even get a clean heart, and keep mum about it, and stay in one of the old-line churches and pay handsomely to support a backslidden preacher who squirts tobacco juice, and rides the billy goat and reviles holiness and you resolutely keep your lips sealed in cowardly silence about what the Holy Spirit has done to cleanse your heart, everything is still lovely, and you are yet counted as an acceptable member of the devil's crowd.

But the very day you break the silence to glorify that Savior who shed the blood for your cleansing, and to honor the Holy Spirit who applied the cleansing to your moral being, the war is on, and hell is let loose.

8. *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.*

People are not persecuted for their goodness, but for their testimony. A heresy of the devil is being widely spread even by good men and religious papers, viz., "Get as holy as you please; but keep still about it." Even dear Moody was caught by the cheap trick of Satan, as the following clipping from a Boston paper sent to me, quoting Moody will show: "When you think you're holy, look out. And let me tell you, when a man really does get holiness he doesn't need to blow a horn. Folks will find it out!"

Probably in all his public career that famous man never said anything more foolish, more harmful or more unscriptural. Jesus said, "When the

Holy Spirit is come upon you, ye shall receive power; and ye shall be my witnesses . . . to the uttermost parts of the earth." Jesus went to Calvary because of this testimony to being the Son of God. St. John the beloved says, "I was banished to the Isle of Patmos for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Madam Guyon spent fourteen years in the dungeons of France because she would testify to full salvation. John Wesley was mobbed up and down England because he taught and bore witness to two works of grace. John Fletcher, Wesley's great friend, testified to having lost his sanctification five times by falling into the devil's trap and failing to testify. After that discovery the course of his Christian life was as steady as the march of a planet. At his funeral Wesley testified, "There lies the holiest man I ever knew, and I never expect to see another his equal this side of heaven."

Frances Willard received the blessing in Evans-ton and was called to Lima, New York, to preside over Genesee Wesleyan Seminary. She was advised by a Methodist doctor of divinity not to testify there on account of Free Methodists. It was cruel advice. She afterward wrote, "I kept still until I soon found I had nothing in particular to keep still about."

The Church of the Nazarene exists today because Dr. Bresee would not cease to testify to please some backslidden ecclesiastics. John the Revelator was informed that the saints in heaven overcame the accuser of the brethren "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony" (Rev. 12:11).

O living saints, do not betray your Savior and Sanctifier by refusing to testify to the great salvation, and so miss the blessedness of being persecuted for righteousness' sake.

My life is one long, daily, hourly record of answered prayer. For physical health, for relief from mental overstrain, for guidance marvelously given, for error and dangers averted, for enmity to the gospel subdued, for food provided at the exact hour needed, for everything that goes to make up life and my poor service, I can testify with a full and wonderstricken awe that I believe God answers prayer. Prayer is the greatest power God has put into our hands for service—praying is harder work than doing (at least I find it so); but that way lies the dynamic to advance the kingdom.—MARY SLESOR.

EXPOSITIONAL

MESSAGES FROM ISAIAH

OLIVE M. WINCHESTER

"A People Laden With Iniquity"

TARRYING with Isaiah in the temple of the Lord we saw the majestic vision, the prophet's sense of sin in himself and the people and the response to the call given despite that the prospect was only one of apparent failure with simply a remnant to preserve the seed of faith in the land. Coming to the first chapter of his prophecies we see the prophet statesman as the master preacher. He had confessed his own sin while in the temple, now he arraigns the people for their sin. This chapter has been called by Ewald, "*The Great Arraignment*," and no better title has ever been found.

A REBELLIOUS PEOPLE

In opening the formal charge against the nation, Isaiah calls heaven and earth to witness this anomaly, a people in rebellion against the Lord their God. *Like tenderly loved children they had been the objects of solicitous care, but they gave no feeling of gratitude in return. Yea, they possessed not the instinct of the dumb beast. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."* Thus the first indictment against the nation is that of insensibility and ingratitude.

Then with increasing intensity of denunciation, the prophet, exclaims, "*A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that deal corruptly!*" They had not simply been carelessly indifferent in their failure to the loving care of Jehovah, but they had heaped to themselves sin and iniquity until they had become a race of evil-doers. So multiplied had been their transgressions and so deep-seated their sin that the wrath of the "Holy One of Israel," their God, had been aroused against them. They have by their sins separated themselves from their God, and have turned backward.

Then from the plain words of declaration, an appeal is made by interrogation, "*Why should ye be stricken any more?*"

Have you not sinned so grievously that its evils have destroyed the moral fiber of your civic polity without further transgressing? Yet not waiting for an answer the message of condemnation goes on, "*Ye will revolt more and more.*" There was no staying the tide of evil; there was no restraining their evil tendencies. They were being borne on from one evil to another.

To set forth the sad plight of the nation in more vivid form, figurative language is employed. The prophet pictures to them the body politic as a diseased person who is covered with putrefying sores. *From the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no soundness.* These sores have been left to fester and grow more angry in their putrefaction. There had been no remedial measures applied. The wounds had not been softened with oil nor bandaged.

Passing from figure to literal description we see again the condition of the nation. Their cities had been burned, strangers were devastating the country before their very eyes, and the capital city, Zion, is left standing alone in the midst of the ruin all about her. *She is like a "booth in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers."* These booths and lodges, Skinner tells us, were "frail structures, consisting of four poles stuck in the ground, with cross-pieces supporting a couch and a slight roof or awning overhead, and were erected for the watchers who guarded the fruit or crop from thieves and wild animals."

So great had been the sin and iniquity of the people of Judah, that if there had not been a righteous remnant in the midst who were loyal to the true worship of Jehovah, the nation would have perished long ago like the wicked cities of the plain, Sodom and Gomorrah. As it was this remnant was very small in number, but the Lord of Hosts had had compassion for their sake.

A FALSE WORSHIP

In answer to the charge thus brought against them, we seem to hear the response of the people justifying themselves that they have offered worship unto the Lord. They have kept the ceremonial rites, the solemn assemblies and have ob-

served the hours of prayer. But again comes the word of the prophet; he calls the people to listen and he inquires as a spokesman of Jehovah.

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord:
I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts:

And I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

When ye come to appear before me,
Who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts

Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me."

So renunciatory was this invective against the sacrificial system of the Hebrews that it has been concluded that the implication is that the system did not exist at the time under the form of a divinely established method of worship, that it was not until the post-exilic days that such a ritualism was introduced with divine sanction. This supposition also carries with it the transferring the major part of the books of the Pentateuch to a later date and refers the priestly legislation to the post-exilic times. But such an inference we feel is not justifiable. While the prophet was denouncing in no uncertain terms the worship of the nation, yet it was not the worship in its rites and ceremonies as such that he condemned. The discourse continues:

"The new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies;

I can not endure iniquity and the solemn meeting" (R. V.)

In this last line we have the explanation of the invective. The underlying cause for this reprobation of the sacrifices and religious festive occasions lay in the fact that they did not represent the pure worship of Jehovah; they constituted simply form and ceremony while in the heart there lay hidden sin and iniquity. Were we to conclude that this renunciation of their rites of worship precluded the existence by divine command any such forms until a later date, we would of necessity have to infer that prayer was also not yet instituted by divine sanction for we read further:

"And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you:

Yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear."

Driver in commenting on this passage states, "The defense which the nation is supposed to offer, that the temple services are maintained with splendor and regularity, and that thus all religious obligations are completely discharged, is

indignantly disallowed by the prophet; no ritual, however costly and elaborate, can supply the place of sincerity of heart and integrity of purpose: God indeed accepts such service from His worshippers, but only as the token and expression of a right mind."

A CALL TO REPENTANCE

Contrasting with this empty worship the call comes to observe the essentials of true worship. True religion, as outlined here exists in two phases, personal as it relates to self in cleansing ourselves from evil and ceasing from its acts, then objective as it relates to others seeking that justice be meted out to the oppressed and that the fatherless and the widow be protected. Thereupon comes the plea:

"Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord:

Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;

Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

But if ye refuse and rebel,

Ye shall be devoured with the sword:

For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

The call to man is to think, to consider, to reflect upon his ways and doings, to arouse within himself the stirring of a better reason. As George Adam Smith says, "The pressure and stimulus of the prophecy lie in this, that although the people have silenced conscience and are steeped in a stupidity worse than ox or ass, God will not leave them alone. He forces Himself upon them; He compels them to think. In the order and calmness of nature, apart from catastrophe or seeking to influence by any miracle, God speaks to men by the reasonable words of His prophet. Before He will publish salvation or intimate disaster He must rouse and startle conscience. His controversy precedes alike His peace and His judgments. An awakened conscience is His prophet's first demand. Before religion can be prayer, or sacrifice, or any acceptable worship, it must be a reasoning together with God. . . . The first chapter of Isaiah is just the parable of the awful compulsion to think which men call conscience. The stupidest of generations, formal and fat-hearted, are forced to consider and to reason. The Lord's court and controversy are opened, and men are whipped into them from His temple and His altar."

AN IMPENDING JUDGMENT

Although every effort was used to arouse the conscience of this indifferent and imperturbable people, yet response was not given, and the prophet in an elegaic refrain depicts the sin within the capital city which is representative of the nation as a whole.

"How is the faithful city become a harlot?
It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it:

But now murderers.

Thy silver is become dross,

Thy wine mixed with water:

Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves:

Every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards:

They judge not the fatherless,

Neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them."

There was the time when the city was governed in righteousness, and justice administered in her courts; but now the rulers have become corrupt and accept bribes; in consequence the widow and the fatherless find no protection in the courts. The city had deteriorated; she had plunged into the depths of sin and iniquity like the woman who plays the harlot. Thus it was the sentence of doom lay upon her. Those whom Jehovah formerly called His children are now regarded as adversaries. The time had come when vengeance would fall upon them. By the purging of severe discipline the city would be restored to its former glory.

"And I will turn my hand upon thee;

And purely purge away thy dross,

And take away all thy tin;

And I will restore thy judges as at the first,

And thy counsellors as at the beginning:

Afterward thou shalt be called,

The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

Zion shall be redeemed with judgment,

And her converts with righteousness."

In the sweep of judgment over the land the transgressors and sinners shall be destroyed and with them all that forsake the Lord. Others shall awake to the folly of their idolatries and be ashamed to engage in such worship. Like other peoples they had worshiped nature in different forms, such as sacred trees and sacred wells. As they looked upon the falling leaf of the oak and felt that the divine life within the tree was dying and as they looked on the spring of water and saw its flow subside concluding that thereby the life of the god within was dying, so should the belief in all superstition die within their own hearts. The

strong among them, the powerful man who gave himself to idolatry would be like the coarse and broken part of the flax and his work as a spark; all would burn together, and there would be no power that could quench the flame.

Thus the city of Zion with her insensibility and ingratitude, with her deep-seated sin and burden of iniquity, with her diseased body politic, with her rebellious princes and corrupt magistrates shall by the judgment of God be purified as ore in a furnace and once again shall become the faithful city. Righteousness shall lodge in her. So in this message to the people we have some of the fundamental teachings of Isaiah distinctly set forth, the nature of true worship, the doctrine of the remnant, the ideal Zion to come.

HOMILETICAL SUGGESTIONS

In seeking for texts verse 2 is suggestive. "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for Jehovah hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." We could set forth two contrasting thoughts, God's loving care and man's rebellion. Then in verses 16, 17, we have essentials of repentance: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil: learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." First there is the seeking to cleanse oneself from all evil habits, then there is the turning from all evil acts, further there is the purpose to know the good and finally there is the adjustment of a right attitude toward all with whom one is associated lending a helping hand when needed. That wonderful promise of sins forgiven in verse 18 ever will be a much loved text and will ever represent to us the fullness of forgiveness.

"In the same way the Spirit also helps us in our weakness; for we do not know what prayers to offer nor in what way to offer them, but the Spirit himself pleads for us in yearnings that can find no words, and the Searcher of hearts knows what the Spirit's meaning is, because His intercessions for God's people are in harmony with God's will." Rom. 8: 26, 27 (Weymouth's translation).

Not knowledge or information, but self-realization is the goal. To possess all the world of knowledge and lose one's own self is as awful a fate in education as in religion.—JOHN DEWEY.

HOMILETICAL

SERMONS FOR FEBRUARY

LEWIS T. CORLETT

The month of February, for the past few years, has been designated by our church as Stewardship Month. This is not simply a time for preaching on "Tithing," while that is included and should be emphasized; it is an opportunity to get the people of the individual churches to comprehend the extent of their obligations to God. God requires a stewardship of time, talents, and of life, as well as of the material goods. The pastor should lead the way in teaching the principles of stewardship during this time, not content just to say something about it on Sunday, but rather be an example to the flock and with the sermons attempt to lead the people on to a greater manifestation of their allegiance to God. Some have found that the preaching of stewardship sermons brings far greater results when coupled with some concrete plan of personal work, or of any type of service for God and the Church. The two special days that most people give attention to in this month are the birthdays of two of our great Presidents, Washington and Lincoln. These lives were given unreservedly to their country and for great issues. Many illustrations can be taken from the events of these lives to influence the people of today; their service, sacrifice, whole-heartedness and devotion to a great cause and to God. The lives of great leaders of the Church can be woven into the sermons also to give concrete examples of the various phases of stewardship.

February 5. Morning Sermon

God in the Budget

(2 Cor. 9:6-8; 1 Cor. 6:20)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Finances are trying problems to the church.
2. Danger of giving and of finances becoming mechanical.
 - a. From a sense of duty rather than of spiritual relationship.
 - b. May cause wrong motives toward supporting the church.

II. PUTTING GOD IN THE BUDGET

1. Recognize God's ownership of all (Psalm 24:1).
2. Present the matter of financing the church as part of worship.
 - a. The Jews counted bringing the tithes and offerings a vital part of worship.
 - b. Just as much a part of God's work as prayer, Bible reading, praise and testimony.
3. Endeavor to maintain a proper motive in raising budgets.
 - a. Not just to excel some other church.
 - b. Not just to appear well in the sight of others.
 - c. A vital part of promotion of God's program of world evangelism.
 - d. A fervent desire to help meet the need of humanity.
4. Relate finances to God so that the offerings increase the spiritual tone of the service.
 - a. The taking of an offering should be such a part of worship that the people will feel more spiritual at the close of the offering than at the beginning.
 - b. Man transfers material things to spiritual values by giving to the cause of God.

III. REWARDS OF THIS ATTITUDE

1. Finances lose their fear and become an asset to the church.
2. The individual Christians receive a sufficiency of grace in all things (2 Cor. 9:8).
3. Visitors are impressed by the hearty co-operation and the spirit of joy in carrying the load of finances.

February 5. Evening Sermon

The Mission of the Christ

(John 18:37)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Christ's defense while on trial before Pilate.
2. Christ came into this world with a purpose to accomplish and a mission to fulfill.

II. THE MISSION OF CHRIST

1. To complete revelation.
 - a. God spoke previously by His prophets, now speaks through His Son (Hebrews 1:1).

- b. The Old Testament is meaningless without the Christ of the New Testament.
 - c. The New Testament would be ruined if all reference to Him was removed.
 - d. Through Him humanity understands more about the Father.
2. To reveal the truth about the devil's reign.
- a. Only temporary reign.
 - b. It seemed that the devil had thwarted God's plan when he deceived the pair in the garden of Eden.
 - c. It seemed at the time of the coming of Christ as if the devil had everything in his control.
 - d. Christ came and fought the battle of redemption to a finish with the devil and showed that, while he may manifest himself for a time, yet the Captain of our salvation is greater and will finally win out over the adversary.
3. To reveal the true attitude of the devil to an immortal soul.
- a. God saw it but humanity was blinded by the devil and could not realize it.
 - b. The picture of the efforts of the devil to ruin, blacken and even to damn the spotless Son of God is a true picture of the real attitude of the devil to the soul of man.
4. To reveal to the world God's viewpoint of sin.
- a. The world was viewing sin through sinful minds, eyes and by judgments warped by generations of sin. They were unable to see just what an awful thing it was.
 - b. The penalty of death had been passed against sin but the devil had blinded the minds of the people to its terror.
 - c. When God demanded the full penalty of death against His own Son while He was bearing the sins of the world, it showed that God would in no wise compromise with sin, nor condone sin.
 - d. Christ's attitude to the Pharisees reveals a portion of God's attitude to sin.
 - e. The world today needs to study the life of Christ to again realize God's viewpoint of sin.
5. To reveal the immutability of God.
- a. That God never changes.
 - b. His justice demands the carrying out of the law.
 - c. His love, mercy and sympathy are ever extended to the fallen of all races.

d. His Word standeth sure and His promises are bound to be fulfilled.

III. CHRIST CAME TO PROVIDE A MEANS WHEREBY MAN COULD HAVE GOD'S VIEWPOINT IN ALL THINGS

- 1. Provided salvation to deliver man from sin.
- 2. Provides grace to sustain and preserve man.
- 3. Man must yield to Him before he can receive His benefits.

February 12. Morning Sermon

Nehemiah

(Read the First Chapter)

I. INTRODUCTION

- 1. Nehemiah was in a strange land—a captive and a slave.
- 2. He was in a comfortable position.
 - a. Better favored than most of his brethren.
 - b. Had a good position.
- 3. Felt like He was missing something important in life.

II. HIS STEWARDSHIP

- 1. He felt obligated to inform himself.
 - a. He asked about Jerusalem and the Jews there (Chap. 1:2).
 - b. He felt that his absence from Jerusalem did not give him an excuse to be ignorant regarding its condition.
- 2. He took upon himself a burden for the welfare of his people (Chap. 1:4-11).
 - a. He had a sympathetic ear and a tender spirit.
 - b. Felt it his privilege as well as his duty to pray about them and for them.
- 3. A courageous adventurer.
 - a. Before the king (Chap. 2:1-8).
 - (1) Made his plea.
 - (2) Outlined his plans.
 - b. In Jerusalem.
 - (1) Served without pay.
 - (2) Encouraged the people in the midst of the ruins (Chap. 2:20).
 - c. Against the enemies of the Jews.
 - (1) Set a proper example to the people (Chap. 4:6, 14).
 - (2) Steadfast and faithful in the midst of opposition (Chap. 6:3).
- 4. Won a joyful victory (Chap. 8:9, 10).

III. AN EXAMPLE FOR PEOPLE TODAY TO FOLLOW

- 1. Each Christian is responsible to inform himself regarding the work of the Lord, both at home and in foreign fields.
- 2. The child of God is obligated, as well as having the joyful privilege, of carrying a burden for the work of the Lord.

3. The members of the church have the privilege of setting a right example for others to follow.
4. The child of God has the promise and prospect of joyful victory for every conflict and labor.

(The example of service set by Abraham Lincoln can be woven into this sermon very easily, and since this is the day of commemoration of his birth, it would be very fitting to use him as an example of stewardship to his country.)

February 12. Evening Sermon

A Sure Foundation (Isaiah 28:16)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Text is preceded by a warning to Jerusalem.
2. So many times in the prophets God, in warning His people of their evil ways, reminds them of His ample provision for deliverance.

II. THE FOUNDATION

1. To be laid in Zion—the spiritual Church (cf. 1 Cor. 3:11).
2. A stone—unity, not many or just any—a specific stone.
 - a. The solidity of the foundation.
 - b. Christ is referred to several times in the Bible as a stone.
 - c. He is the one through whom all the processes of salvation bring man into proper state before God.
- Illustration—In the Congressional Library there is a copy of the Constitution of the United States that is rather uneven and upon first notice it looks to be a careless arrangement but upon closer study, the face of George Washington stands out in outline having been made in the writing of the Constitution. Thus it is with Christ, what may seem to be strange in the plan of salvation is but bringing out what He did for humanity.
3. A tried stone.
 - a. Engineers always try the stones for their foundation to insure stability and permanency.
 - b. Christ has been tried from all sources.
 - (1) His enemies tried Him from the time of birth, through a great variety of circumstances, until He was placed in the tomb.
 - (2) His friends tried Him and He healed their sick, raised their dead, pardoned their sins, comforted their souls and gave them a hope of something better.

4. A precious corner-stone.

- a. The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone.
- b. The corner stone was for the purpose of binding the building and foundation together.
 - (1) It adorned and beautified the building.
 - (2) The corner stone today is used to let the people know what the building is and when it was built.
- c. Christ is all of this. He binds human souls with divinity; upholds them by His strong arm; adorns and beautifies them with His presence; and He it is whose name they bear.

5. Sure foundation.

- a. "A Lamb slain before the foundation of the world."
- b. "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore, Amen, and have the keys of death and hell."
- c. "Upon this rock will I build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

III. RESULTS OF BEING ON THIS FOUNDATION

1. "He that believeth shall not make haste."
 - a. Shall not be ashamed.
 - b. Shall not run to and fro as men at their wits' end; shall not be shifting hither and thither for their own safety, nor be driven by any terrors.
2. Shall not be in a hurry.
 - a. At death.
 - b. At the judgment.

February 19. Morning Sermon

Service (1 Thess. 1:3)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Man serves someone.
 - a. He makes his own choice of masters (Joshua 24:15).
 - b. Cannot serve two masters at the same time (Matt. 6:24).
2. Experience of grace prompts service.
 - a. Implants a desire to express what has been received.
 - b. Service necessary for proper appreciation of the grace received.

II. WHAT SERVICE CAN A CHRISTIAN RENDER?

1. Worship.
 - a. Christ stated that the Father seeks people to worship Him (John 4:23).
 - b. The hall of fame in Hebrews eleven lays first stress on those who were above the ordinary in worship.
 - c. Christians made a kingdom of priests

so they can better worship (1 Peter 2:5, 8).

- d. Worship keeps man in tune with God and keeps God in connection with the daily practical life.

2. Witnessing.

- a. Jesus stated that those receiving the Holy Spirit would be witnesses for Him (Acts 1:8).
- b. The purpose of Christ's working in His children is that they should show it forth (1 Peter 2:9).
- c. The Christians are ambassadors for Christ to represent Him in this world (2 Cor. 5:20).
- d. A true witness delivereth souls (Proverbs 14:25).

3. Work.

- a. The Christians are workers together with God (1 Cor. 3:9).
- b. A work of faith, a labor of love (1 Thess. 1:3, 9).
- c. Soldiers for God.
 - (1) Not defending God.
 - (2) Fighting with Him as the Captain (1 Sam. 17:47; 2 Chron. 20:15).

III. How Do I SERVE?

1. What motive controls my service?

Illustration—A fable is told of a group of dogs talking together. One old dog was very boastful of his record as a runner. In the midst of his boasting a hare ran by and he gave chase. After some time he returned without the hare. The other dogs made fun of him for losing out after he had bragged so much. He answered them, "It was this way, the hare was running for its life, while I was only running for my dinner." For what are you serving God?

2. What influence does the example of service give?

3. Does my service increase my spiritual powers?

February 19. Evening Sermon

"Who Is He?"

(John 9:35, 36)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Biblical setting of the text.
2. An honest question, to which the Master gives an answer.

II. Who Is He?

1. He is the One of whom Moses and the prophets wrote.
 - a. Promised in Gen. 3:15.
 - b. The One of whom Jacob spoke in Gen. 49:10.

- c. The One of whom Moses wrote in Deut. 18:15-17.

- d. In the twenty-second Psalm David gives a picture of His suffering.

- e. The One of whom Isaiah spoke in so many parts of his prophecy.

- f. Micah told His birthplace, Daniel spoke of Him as the Messiah, Jeremiah as the Balm of Gilead, Zechariah told of His triumphant entering into Jerusalem, Malachi spoke of Him as the Sun of Righteousness.

2. He is the central theme of the New Testament.

- a. Angel told Joseph about Him (Matt. 1:21).

- b. The Father testified about Him at His baptism (Matt. 3:17).

- c. The One who set aside the law of nature at the marriage at Cana.

- d. The One who gave the miraculous draught of fishes.

- e. The One who spoke "Be thou clean" to the leper and he was whole.

- f. The One who healed all manner of diseases.

- g. The One who stilled the tempest on Lake Galilee.

- h. The One who raised the dead.

- i. The One who fed the multitude with five small loaves and two fishes.

- j. The One who comforted His disciples.

- k. The One who was crucified for the sins of the world.

- l. The One who the angels testified was coming again.

- m. The One who Paul said should have the pre-eminence in all things.

- n. The One whom Peter spoke of as the living hope.

- o. The One the Revelator saw as the Coming King of Glory.

3. The testimony of the hymn writers.

- a. Newton—"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," etc.

- b. Cowper—"There is a fountain filled with blood," etc.

- c. C. Wesley—"Jesus, Lover of My Soul."

- d. Ray Palmer—"My Faith Looks Up to Thee," etc.

III. Who Is He to You?

1. Is He as a root out of dry ground or the One altogether lovely?

2. Is He just a good man or is He the Son of God?

3. Is He just a teacher or is He the Savior of men?

4. Your vision of Him will regulate what He can do for you.

February 26. Morning Sermon

Making the One Talent Profitable
(Matt. 25:14-30)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. More people seem to have one talent than have more than one.
2. A large per cent of those who have one talent do not try to find a use for their talent.

II. WHY DID THE MAN WITH THE ONE TALENT FAIL?

1. He did not appreciate what he had.
 - a. Was envious and jealous of the others who received more.
 - b. Was unhappy because of what he did not have instead of valuing what was given him.
 - c. He became possessed with a spirit of complaining.
2. Refused to recognize his own limitations.
 - a. Scoffed at the wisdom of the Master in his distribution.
 - b. Failed to realize that there were others who were more talented and had a greater capacity than he.
3. He did not properly use what He received.
 - a. Lack of anything does not bring sorrow.
 - b. It is the use or misuse of what a person has that regulates his joy or sorrow.
 - c. He buried the talent but later he had to uncover it to his own misery.

III. HOW TO MAKE THE ONE TALENT PROFITABLE

1. Appreciate it.
 - a. Be thankful that you have that much.
 - b. Be grateful to God for some recognition of ability.
 - c. Be happy in that God has given you a means of being a blessing.
2. Seek for ways and means to develop it.
3. Recognize that no one but yourself can hinder you from successful use of what you have.
4. Remember God rewards faithful service in both large and small matters.

IV. There is happiness for all who are doing their best for the Master.**February 26. Evening Sermon**

The Second Coming of Christ
(Acts 1:10, 11)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The same Bible which prophesied so literally of Christ's first coming also speaks of His second coming.
 - a. The prophecies of the Old Testament made many references to it.

b. An average of every 22nd verse of the New Testament treats of it.

2. It is a practical doctrine and used as an exhortation to salvation and all manner of righteous living.

II. THE FACT OF HIS COMING

1. Jesus spoke of it a number of times.
 - a. Matt. 16:27; John 14:1-3.
 - b. He taught it by direct statement, in parables and from pictures of everyday life.
 - c. Commanded His disciples to "occupy" until He did come.
2. The testimony of the angels.
 - a. At the time of the ascension (Acts 1:10, 11).
 - b. An angel is yet to cry about it (Rev. 19:7, 8).
3. Prominent in the writings of the apostles.
 - a. Paul gave it a place in most of his epistles (1 Cor. 15:23; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:14-18; Titus 2:13; Heb. 9:28).
 - b. James wrote about it (James 5:7, 8).
 - c. Peter describes conditions preceding His coming (2 Peter 4:10).
 - d. Jude spoke about it (Jude 14).
 - e. John told of it (Rev. 1:7).

III. THE MANNER OF HIS COMING

1. A personal coming (Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:16).
2. A bodily visible coming (Heb. 9:28; Rev. 1:7).
3. With great publicity (Matt. 24:27).
4. In power and great glory (Matt. 24:30).
5. Sudden and unannounced (Matt. 24:44; 1 Thess. 5:2).

IV. PREPARATION FOR HIS COMING

1. Commanded to be ready and watching for His coming (Matt. 24:44).
2. In peace and without spot before Him (2 Peter 3:14).
3. Having on the wedding garment (Matt. 22:11-14).

GOD'S CALL TO MAN

By MELBA H. BROWN

1. The call to salvation.
 "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me" (Gal. 1:15; 16).
 This call comes to the sinner in various ways and involves repentance and faith, if accepted. Paul the writer was called on the Damascus road by the Lord Jesus himself.
2. The call to fellowship.
 "God is faithful, by whom ye were called

into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9).

The Lord Jesus desires our fellowship and communion. Salvation is not only from sin, but to a life of glorious companionship.

3. The call to holiness.

"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (1 Thess. 4:7).

The same God that calls the sinner to repentance and thereby to initial salvation also calls the Christian to a full consecration and thereby to full salvation.

4. The call to service.

"Come ye after me and I will make you to become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17).

Christ expects service of His followers and a call to salvation involves also a call to service. Let no man think the Christian life a life of idleness.

5. The call to definite work.

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2).

It is very important that God's work be carried on by God-called men and women. A call to definite service does not insure success but a God-called man or woman could succeed or God would not have called that individual.

6. The heavenly call.

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling" (Heb. 3:1).

God's call is a heavenly call. The call comes from above and is always upward. It is heavenly in nature and if responded to will produce fitness for heaven and lead to heaven in the end.

7. The call to unity.

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body" (Col. 3:15).

God's desire is for unity, peace, and harmony. There are many who seem to feel called to produce an opposite condition, but it is evident they received their calling from another source than God.

"How easy it is, when one has not genius, to overlook it in the man who has it and to find him very like ordinary men!"—Dr. GLOVER.

Deep, lacerated wounds heal slowly. Newly healed scars are tender spots. Too often we wound our brother deeply and then complain about his "touchy feelings."—D. H. WALWORTH, Peru.

SERMON OUTLINES FROM ACTS

ERWIN G. BENSON

THEME: *The Lame Man Healed*

TEXT: Acts 3:1-11.

I. THE LAME MAN AT THE GATE

1. Gate Beautiful—most costly of all.
2. At the door of the church but no help.
3. People expect help from the church.
4. Was in this condition from birth.

II. DISCIPLES STOPPED TO HELP

1. Paused to help even though on way to religious service.
2. Too many rush on to perform formal rites—hit and run drivers.

III. DISCIPLES CALLED ATTENTION TO THEMSELVES

1. They knew they had the true power.
2. Their lives would bear inspection.
3. They had something real to give.
4. They had to give what they had—carnality or spirituality will out.

IV. PROCESS OF THE WORK

1. Lifted him up.
2. "Leaping up."
3. "Stood."
4. "Walked."
5. "Leaping and praising God."

V. CHRIST REJECTERS

1. Are formal.
2. Are astonished at spiritual results.
3. Lack power to help others.

THEME: *Repentance and Conversion*

TEXT: Acts 3:19.

I. MAN MUST REPENT

1. Job repented in dust and ashes (Job 42:5, 6).
2. David truly repented (Psa. 51:1-12).
 - a. Consciousness of guilt.
 - b. Acknowledgment of transgression.
 - c. Realization that transgression is against God.
 - d. Fear that God will leave before He pardons.

II. MAN MUST BE CONVERTED

1. God does the turning (Jer. 31:18).
2. Means God uses in conversion.
 - a. Word of God (Psa. 19:7).
 - b. Preaching (1 Cor. 4:15).
 - c. Afflictions (Psa. 78:34).
3. What conversion does.
 - a. Changes attitude toward God.
 - b. Changes life.

THEME: *The Saving Name*

TEXT: Acts 4:12.

I. HUMANITY HAS ONE GREAT NEED

1. This need is not:
 - a. Food, raiment or shelter.
 - b. Wealth, fame, knowledge or pleasure.
 - c. Home.
2. This need is salvation.
 - a. Man is sick like a man with leprosy or a man with cancer.
 - b. Man is lost like a man in the mountains or in darkness or in a storm at sea.
- II. MANY QUACKS TRY TO REMEDY THE NEED
 1. Many say, "Catch suckers like we did."
 2. The test for the remedy,
 - a. Does it allow supernatural power?
 - b. Is it scriptural?
 - c. Does it provide a complete cure?
- III. THERE IS SALVATION ONLY IN A NAME
 1. The name stands for a person.
 2. Other names must not be included.
 3. There is no other name.

THEME: *Companionship with Jesus*

TEXT: Acts 4:13.

- I. INTRODUCTION
 1. The lame man healed.
 2. Peter's sermon.
 3. Peter before the Sanhedrin.
- II. A COMPANIONSHIP THAT TRANSFORMS
 1. These unlearned and ignorant men could stand before the Sanhedrin unafraid.
 2. A mistaken idea.
 - a. They assumed that personal contact had made the difference.
 - b. The coming of the Holy Spirit gave them inward communion with Jesus.
 - c. This communion is for all.
 3. This is a companionship of conversation.
- III. THE CHARACTER THAT IS PRODUCED
 1. To be with Christ is to be Christlike.
 2. Character is produced by experience of the truth.
 3. Freedom from fear of man.
 4. Opens a man's lips.
- V. The impression that that character makes.
 1. Things done are different from the natural.
 - a. Not natural for unlearned men to address Sanhedrin.
 - b. Not natural for men to court death.
 - c. Not natural for men not to be angry or impatient.
 2. Their love for one another.
 - a. Great grace was upon them.
 - b. Distribution to every man as he had need.

THEME: *The Directing Voice*

TEXT: Acts 4:19.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Every man is influenced by others.
2. Every man must choose between opinions of others.
- II. ALL MUST CHOOSE WHETHER TO LISTEN TO GOD OR TO MAN
 1. Gain may come by listening to man's voice.
 2. It is not right to listen to any but God.
- III. HOW THE VOICE SPEAKS
 1. Not in the whirlwind but in the voice.
 2. Voice spoke to Samuel in the night.
 3. "My sheep know my voice" (John 10:27).
 4. Impressions tested by Bible.
- IV. VOICE DIRECTS TO SPEAK OF THINGS SEEN AND HEARD.
 1. God directs to witness only to realities.
 2. God directs to witness to truth of Bible according to experience.

THEME: *Tempting the Spirit*

TEXT: Acts 5:9.

- I. INTRODUCTION
 1. They had all things in common.
 2. Great grace was upon them all.
 3. Distribution was made according as they had need.
- II. KEPT BACK PART OF THE PRICE
 1. Ananias wanted to be one of the number and sold his possessions.
 2. His motive was undoubtedly good.
 3. He failed when it came to carrying out that motive.
 4. Sinners keep back part of the price.
 5. Christians keep back part of the price.
 6. To keep back part of the price is to tempt the Spirit.
- III. SATAN WAS ALLOWED TO FILL HIS HEART
 1. Satan is ever ready to suggest.
 2. Man may resist temptation or suggestion.
 3. Was given opportunity to stand for the right (v. 8).
- IV. A LIE TO GOD AND NOT TO MAN
 1. May act part of lie.
 2. May tell man but God knows.
 3. We deal with God not man.
- V. RESULT OF TEMPTING THE SPIRIT WAS DEATH.

THEME: *A Model Christian*

TEXTS: Acts 6:5 and 8.

- I. INTRODUCTION
 1. The number of disciples was increasing.
 2. Murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews.
 3. The decision of the apostles.
- II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THOSE CHOSEN
 1. Of a good report—this was first—was necessary to have confidence of the people.

2. Full of the Holy Spirit—this was the first spiritual need—notice word "full."
3. Full of wisdom—judgment—discretion—economy—tact.
4. Full of faith—unswerving faith in the risen Christ—faith in fellow men—faith in God's promises.
5. Full of grace—grace not to talk about others—not to fight back—overlook faults—overlook criticism—overlook personal jibes.
6. Full of power—a driving dynamic force.

III. STEPHEN

1. Could carry responsibility.
2. Was a preacher.
3. Could stand for convictions.

THEME: *Not for Sale*

TEXT: Acts 8:20.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Saul was making havoc in the churches.
2. The disciples were scattered everywhere preaching.
3. Philip went preaching in Samaria.
4. People will give heed when Christ is preached.

II. CHARACTER AND LIFE OF SIMON

1. A Jew using magic and sorcery to gain money.
2. People believe him to be power of God.
3. He recognized the reality of Philip's preaching.
4. Went with the crowd to save his face.
5. Was interested in the miracles and signs which were done.

III. TRIED TO COMMERCIALIZE THE GOSPEL

1. Offered money to receive power to give the Holy Ghost.
2. This proved that he was not sincere in believing Philip.
3. The gospel is not for sale.
 - a. This would mean that only the rich could receive.
 - b. This would make it fashionable and popular.
4. Men have tried to buy God out since then.
 - a. Come my way.
 - b. I'll get saved if—
5. Simony is now name for corrupt practice.

IV. THE HEART ATTITUDE DETERMINES RELIGION

1. Holy Ghost comes as a result of the heart being right.
2. Observance of ordinances may help heart to be right.

V. RESULT

1. "Thy money perish with thee."
2. "Repent of this wickedness."

3. "Pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart be forgiven."
4. Did not pray for self but asked Peter to pray.
5. Asked only that he should escape that which Peter had said would come upon him.

THEME: *Worship*

TEXT: *A man of Ethiopia . . . had come to Jerusalem for to worship* (Acts 8:27).

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Men everywhere seek something to worship.
2. We are commanded to worship God only.
3. Worship means more than just coming to church.

II. ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP

1. Gratitude or thanksgiving.
2. Praise.
3. Reverence.
4. Gladness.
5. Adoration.
6. Honor.
7. Exaltation.

III. ACTS OF WORSHIP

1. These acts must be done in spirit and in truth and in the beauty of holiness.
2. Singing songs.
3. Praise.
4. Preaching.
5. Giving.
6. Prayer.
7. Observance of Sabbath.

THEME: *Yearning for Light*

TEXT: Acts 8:26-40.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Ethiopian—country—how came proselyte to Judaism—purpose of being in Jerusalem.
2. Philip's commission—had preached and baptized in Samaria—was told to go south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem to Gaza—was obedient.

II. THE MEETING

1. The eunuch was sitting in his chariot and reading—most people talk about their affairs of the week while traveling rather than read further in the Bible.
2. Philip instructed to go near and join the chariot—many people want to wait for proper introduction.

III. THE CONVERSATION

1. Philip asked if he understood—we should be anxious to explain the Bible and not our theories.
2. "How can I except some man should

guide me?"—in other words, "I would like to understand fully, if someone would show me."

IV. THE PLACE OF READING IN THE SCRIPTURES

1. Isa. 53:7, 8.
2. The eunuch could not understand this.
 - a. Someone as a sheep led to slaughter.
 - b. Someone as a lamb dumb before his shearers.
 - c. Someone who did not open his mouth in self-defense.
 - d. Someone whose judgment was not fair.
 - e. Someone whose life was taken.

V. PHILIP PREACHED JESUS UNTO HIM AND USED THE SCRIPTURE AS A TEXT

VI. THE ETHIOPIAN ACCEPTS IMMEDIATELY—BELIEVED WITH ALL HIS HEART AND WAS BAPTIZED

1. Did not hesitate to accept.
2. Many people are yearning after light.
3. It is more dangerous to receive light and turn it down than not to receive.

THEME: *A chosen vessel*

TEXT: Acts 9:15, 16.

I. THE CHOSEN VESSEL

1. Definition
 - a. Vessel means the means by which an act is done.
 - b. Chosen means choice or excellent.
2. God chooses His vessels or plans His work.
 - a. God has a definite plan for His work and His people.
 - b. God's plan is to fit the best in the right place.
 - c. The vessel must submit.
3. Other chosen vessels.
 - a. Martin Luther.
 - b. John Wesley.
 - c. P. F. Bresee.
 - d. Living men.

II. THE PURPOSE OF THE CHOSEN VESSEL

1. To bear Jesus' name before the Gentiles.
2. To bear Jesus' name before kings.
3. To bear Jesus' name before the children of Israel.

III. TO BE A CHOSEN VESSEL MEANS SUFFERING

1. Acts 20:23.
2. 2 Cor. 11:23-28.
3. Gal. 6:17.
4. Phil. 1:29.

Sometimes we are conscious of a satanic impulse directed immediately against the life of prayer in our souls; sometimes we are led into "aridities" and "wilderness" experiences, and the face of God grows dark above us; sometimes,

when we strive most earnestly to bring every thought and imagination under obedience to Christ, we seem to be given over to disorder and unrest; sometimes the inbred slothfulness of our nature lends itself to the evil one as an instrument by which he may turn our minds back from the exercise of prayer.—DAVID M. McINTYRE.

BUILDING

By MELZA H. BROWN

TEXT: *The removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain* (Heb. 12:27).

INTRODUCTION

This is a world of building.

Many great structures erected.

1. The engineering world.
Cathedrals, monuments, bridges, systems, factories, etc.
2. Business world.
Corporations, trusts, chain markets, industries.
3. Political world.
Governments, states, nations.
4. Social world.
Clubs, lodges, organizations.
5. Religious world.
Ecclesiasticisms, organizations, church bodies.

DISCUSSION

We are all builders.

1. Many are building homes.
2. Some are building a fortune or estate.
3. Some are building a name.
4. All are building a character.
 - a. Not all of the same kind.
 - b. A good character worth building.
 - (1) The essentials for building such.
 - (a) A goal, a definite aim.
 - (b) Sure foundation.
Jesus Christ, the Rock of Ages.
 - (c) Good material.
Not light and trashy.
 - (d) Perseverance.
Build, build, build.

Christians are building.

1. A character for eternity.
2. An experience.

To build one worth while takes time and patience.
Job is a monument of grace.
He did not become such in a moment.
The test of your experience is how much you can stand.
God's people are a tried people.
3. A personality.
I am what I am.

Let the righteous be righteous still,
I will be known in eternity not by looks
but by what I am,

CONCLUSION

All buildings to be tested.

By the building inspector of the skies.
Many are being shaken now and some are
falling.

Will our buildings stand as those which can-
not be shaken?

PRACTICAL

MAKING A MINISTER

PAUL S. HILL

The "call to preach" is a ministerial secret because it is something that cannot be told. Even if one wished to pour out this secret of his heart to some of his fellow ministers he could not do it, for it is beyond human expression. To simply say, "I have received a call to preach," may be sufficient information for a board of examination, or committee on orders and relations, and start the church machinery so that a place for service is opened, but it does not express that awful session with God when the soul and heart, mind and spirit were taken apart, lay on the altar, shattered and torn, stripped of all self, and well-high separated from all normal human living. Nor does it express the new man that emerges from that session with God with a new vision, a new way to heaven for him, a new claim of God forced on all his abilities and powers. It does not speak his new alliance with God nor the closeness of the Spirit's presence. These are things that cannot be told so that the other fellow will understand. It is a secret so deep in the heart that words are wholly inadequate for its expression.

In the Old Testament times the ministry was almost wholly confined to the tribe of Levi. But now the ministry is ordained of God without respect to any particular tribe or nation. The "call" comes to those whom God chooses, and is not regulated by creed or social position. It is the prerogative of God to call His ministers, and by the exercise of this prerogative there is maintained a Spirit-called, and Spirit-filled ministry, and this in spite of the demand of worldly churches, and congregations of wealthy "social climbers."

The fact that so many preachers receive their call during revival meetings or times of great spiritual awakenings is a good comment on the whole proceedings of the work of the Spirit.

When God is convicting sinners He also is converting penitents, sanctifying believers, establishing saints, and calling men to preach. The whole work of the Spirit is carried on at the same time. A revival of religion is not needed to get a sinner converted. That is, an evangelistic meeting is not necessary. Neither is such a meeting necessary to get a seeker sanctified, but there is need of clear light, a good spiritual atmosphere, an atmosphere of faith and obedience; and there is need of just such an atmosphere to get a "call to preach" established in a man's soul. If any man is cloudy about his call, let him pray and wait on God by faith till the atmosphere is filled with holy power, and his vision gets clarified by pentecostal fire and glory. And if he does not get the matter cleared up in an atmosphere of that sort, then he had better not take it that he is called to preach or at least he had better not try to settle the question on some lesser plane.

Evidently some make the mistake of thinking that all "calls" to religious work are calls to preach in the sense of a full-fledged minister of the gospel. We can think of some who would have filled the bill as local preacher or Sunday school worker who has failed because he thought he had received a "call to the ministry." Nearly every denomination has a place for these workers, and if they can only find their place they do a great service and bless thousands of people. It would seem an almost harmless mistake for a man to think he is called to preach when God is trying to make a class leader out of him, but it really becomes serious if he does not discover his mistake and take his place.

For some years we had opportunity to watch the men and women, young and old, who came before the board of examination and said God had "called" them to preach. We wrote their names in a book, asked them about their faith

and practice, education, purposes in life, etc. We can honestly say we tried to help and encourage every one of them. However, of all that applied only a few carried through, and some never came back again. Most of them were of good quality, clear eyes, a firm handclasp, and evidently possessed some educational advantages. Nearly all professed to be sanctified wholly. But they either were mistaken in their call, or else were disobedient to it. We hope that such persons found just what it was that God actually wanted of them; and applied themselves to the task.

While the "call" to preach may be the turning point, yet we are sure that there is a *before*; and *after* preparation. God has something to do with the life of the minister before. He calls him, and He continues to have something to do with his life after He calls him. It would seem that every man that God calls to preach should honestly desire to be as good a preacher as he can be, and should gladly avail himself of every opportunity to get help and accept such improvements as will make him a better minister. It stands to reason that man who is a minister should want to be as good a minister as his abilities will permit. There isn't much that can be said about the *before* preparation of the minister, but a great deal can be said about the *after* preparation. The preparation of the preacher before his "call" is tangled up in the influences and surroundings through which the man passes as child and youth. It is in this field that the unseen and unrecognized hand of God, in providential working, prepares the preacher for his coming ministry. Just where the future preachers are now is impossible to say, but we may be sure that the hand of God is shaping the events of their lives so they will come down to the calling point somewhat equipped. Paul said he "was made a minister," and we judge that about the last thing Saul of Tarsus expected to do was "to preach Christ, and the resurrection from the dead." But in spite of all his bitter opposition he was being "made," and when the "call" came it found him "a chosen vessel" and "debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and the unwise," and with "As much as in me is—ready to preach the gospel." God had been preparing him when he did not know it. He was a student, Bible scholar, theologian, logician, scientist, linguist, Roman citizen, zealous, energetic, a natural leader of men. All this preparation he had re-

ceived before he ever thought of preaching. God had thought of it, but Saul had not. When the "call" came, and God took his soul apart and melted him up in the crucible of "light above the brightness of the noonday sun," and "shined in his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," and got him put back together again, with the "scales off his eyes," and "obedient to the heavenly vision," "straightway he preached Jesus, that he was the Christ."

Just what use Saul would have made of this preparation unless he had been a preacher, is impossible to say. The only way we can judge is by the record of his opposition to the Church, and if he had used his wonderful abilities in this direction he probably would have mowed a big swath for a short time, and then his sun would have sunk against a gory background of bleeding martyrs, and his memory would be that of a man whose gigantic mind and abilities were "vilely cast away."

Every man that God prepares, and calls to preach, should preach. He should preach if he wants to save his own soul for God and heaven. He should preach if he wants to escape a life that is a failure from every viewpoint of God and man. He should preach in order to save the years of his lifetime and the soul of his eternity.

Passing over the "zero hour" of the call, when God and the prospective preacher come to grips, let us state at once that there is a lot of *after* preparation necessary, regardless of how much has preceded the call. If Paul went through a lot of preparation before he was called, he went through more afterward. His first instalment of preparation was at the feet of Gamalliel, his second received in jails, shipwrecks, dangers, and from the comfort and strength of the Holy Ghost. It took more than his education to complete his preparation for the ministry. If he had failed in the school of hard knocks his ministry would have been destroyed. This seems to us important, for we believe that many very able men have failed as ministers just because they did not stand the gaff that the experience of preaching brings. Perhaps they failed because they thought that an education and a "call" was enough to carry them clear through. They knew it all the first time they preached. They felt the glow of a full consecration to God and the ministry, but

they discovered, when it was possibly too late, that they needed some more "making."

Those who come before the examining board are asked, "Do you promise to take the 'course of study'?" Usually someone on the examining board supplements that question with an explanation something like this: "We are glad that God has called you to preach, and we are sure that if God has called you want to be the best preacher it is possible for God to make out of you. Now here is a course of study. The course is not heavy, and you can easily manage it, and we know there are things in this course that will help you to be a better preacher than you will be without it. Study hard and come back next year with such a good record that we will be pleased to pass you along. God bless you and give you a good year." And that is the last the examining board sees of some of them. They just don't show up again. Stumped at the first stage of the "after" preparation, some continue a year, some dwindle out later on, and a big majority of us who have been ordained have just about petered out later on and our ministry is mostly failure because we slump in the "after" preparation.

TEXTS

Some time ago I read in a magazine that comes to my house this statement: "There are really only a few great texts in the Bible from which to preach." It then went on to explain how certain subjects which could be used as sermons have certain texts that should be used when these subjects are preached. That is, each subject has its own great text, its classic text, and that to use another than that one robs the minister of his mightiest weapon. Other scriptures might be used, of course, but that one great text provides a full foundation for the subject, and is the place where the sermon should begin, where it should be developed and where it should stop. It gave a few illustrations of great texts, such as John 3:16, Matt. 28:18-20, etc. Some texts presented dealt with such subjects as "The Sovereignty of God," "Faith," "Grace," "Perseverance," "Heaven," with a brief suggestion of how this "big" text should be used, and why it should be used when that particular subject is presented in a sermon.

The result of reading the article was perhaps just the opposite of what the author of it wished; for I began to read my Bible to see if there were a great variety of texts that I should use. I am

sure that John 3:16 is a classic, that it is possibly the biggest text in the whole Bible, and if a preacher could adequately deal with that text so as to preach its contents, he surely would preach a sermon. But for my part I get lost in it, and when I get out of it, if I bring much of it with me it is accidental. I would rather take a lesser text and preach some, than take this big text, and preach almost nothing. Well, as I said, I began to look for texts, not the classics, but the ones nearer my size. I opened my Bible at random and read, "Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die." That looked like a good text to me. I continued reading, "And he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man." It seemed to me that a good text would be, "I go the way of all the earth." Another good text for me was, "And he charged Solomon his son, saying, . . . Be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man." Great preachers may be able to confine their texts to the classics, but most of us lesser preachers use whatever we can; and in doing so preach better than we would if we tried the big ones all the time. God made David as well as Saul. But Saul's armor did not fit David. David with his sling and stones did more damage to the enemy than big Saul with his big armor. Just what David would have done if he had been big enough to fill Saul's coat of mail is not known. He knew enough not to fight in it. We may put on big texts, and clothe our thinking with them, and preach from them if we can, but let us not be discouraged with the lesser ones.

But how are we to tell just what is the big text? To me the big text is the one that impresses me the most at the time. Until the text looks big I am not ready to use it. There may be a bigger one for the subject, but this is the biggest one to me. We should preach from a text that is big to us, and the bigness of it should appear as the background of our sermon.

The Bible is full of texts. Every page has them. Even in the genealogies appear characters that can be used. It seems to us that many of these texts can be used with good effect.

"Paul had three pictures for the Church—the family, the human body and the temple of God—every one of them implying a new unity in design with great diversity of function."—DR. GLOVER.

CHANGING SCENES

W. B. WALKER

REV. PARSONS and Rev. Noble crossed each other's pathway in Jacksonville for the first time. These men were about the same age and both had equal experience in the pastorate. Both had been well trained for their work. Rev. Noble spent three happy years in Jacksonville, which was his first pastorate. The church grew from a small membership to a large and enthusiastic congregation. The people were happy and prosperous. Old debts of long standing had been liquidated. The Sunday school had grown from seventy-five to two hundred in average attendance. In the midst of such progress and advancement Rev. Noble received a call to another church in a strategic center of population. However, he was getting a church that had run down and was sadly discouraged. The membership was small and struggling. Yet this young minister felt the call was in the will of God.

The people of Jacksonville were very much devoted to their pastor. Of course everything had not moved along without some difficult situations. There was a small group of people who desired a change, but in the face of this situation, Rev. Noble had been recalled for another year. But when this hustling minister read his resignation to his faithful flock there was much weeping. However the people accepted his resignation; feeling, perhaps, the matter was from the Lord. The farewell service was one to never be forgotten in the Jacksonville congregation.

The new field of labor was quite a distance from the city of Jacksonville. It took the moving parson and his family exactly four days to make the trip. Upon arriving in Park Center, the new pastor discovered that there was no furniture in the parsonage, and that no definite preparations had been made for his coming. There had been no appearance of his picture in the Park Center Independent. Therefore the people of this splendid city knew nothing of the coming of the new pastor. The congregation was discouraged, and had entertained the idea of having a pastor for only half time for the new year.

But in the face of the poor reception Rev. Noble preached on the first Sunday morning from Paul's message to the Galatians: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." There was gracious rejoicing among the small congregation that had gathered. Oh,

how the chilled hearts of the people were warmed. The people were so blest and encouraged that at the close of the service they flocked around the new pastor and pledged him their best co-operation in putting across a great spiritual program for the church. In the evening a much larger congregation was present. There were some four or five seekers in the altar. The service closed with a shout of victory in the camp. This discouraged people had dwindled down to a membership of only fifteen resident members. But even if the membership was small the church building was a nice frame building with a modern six-room parsonage, and the location was ideal.

The first effort of the new minister was to put on a genuine revival. In exactly three months from the date of his coming Evangelist Lumberman was on the ground preaching repentance and all the cardinal doctrines of the Bible. But there was so much excitement in Park Center over the recent oil boom that it was next to impossible to attract the people to church. Thousands were there from all sections of the country. The streets were literally streaming with people. In addition to the small crowds, there was much confusion among the members. It was during this revival that Sister Jacobs and Sister Franklin buried their hatchets to never dig them up again. This brought great rejoicing among the people. At the close of this revival ten new members were received into the church, and the evangelist was well remunerated for his labors.

Immediately following the revival Rev. Noble was exceedingly busy visiting the members, and also in visiting the new people he had met during the revival. The crowds began to increase in the regular services. The Sunday school attendance was greatly on the increase and the offerings had more than doubled since his coming. A number of new members had been received into the church since the revival with Evangelist Lumberman. Many new people were praying through in the regular services. The prayer meetings had doubled in attendance and interest. On a never-to-be-forgotten Sunday morning a splendid young man came into the church. He was discouraged and ready to end his life. He had recently lost his wife and was despairing of life. But on this memorable morning this broken-hearted young man came to the altar and prayed through and was later elected as president of the Young People's Society. He made a splendid leader for the young people.

Rev. Noble joined the Park Center Ministerial Alliance. A letter preceded him from Jacksonville recommending the new pastor. He had not been in Park Center very long until he was elected president of this organization. And because of his increasing popularity in the city he conducted services in all the public schools and in the three denominational colleges.

In the late summer Rev. Noble planned a big tent revival with an outstanding evangelist and his wife. The revival was extensively advertised as the pastor was an ardent believer in advertisement. The surrounding communities knew about the revival. Seats were arranged for a large attendance, even in the face of criticism from some of the members. On the first Sunday night all the seats were taken. Rev. York, the evangelist, was a devoted church booster. A great revival broke out in which more than two hundred people were converted or sanctified wholly. The revival netted fifty-four new members for the church. Rev. Noble was a strong believer in revivals and salvation work. However, he planned for only two revival campaigns each year. He was a sincere supporter of his evangelistic workers. During the first year seventy new members were received into the Park Center church. The Sunday school increased from one hundred to two hundred in regular attendance, and all the District and General Budgets were raised in full.

The recall meeting had been announced for Monday night two weeks hence. When the evening arrived there was a large representation of the membership present. Rev. Deerfield, the faithful District Superintendent presided with dignity and poise. The vote was taken and the tellers were excused to count the ballots. In less than three minutes the tellers returned and reported that Rev. Noble received every vote. So amid great jubilation the pastor graciously accepted the call for another year.

Three years have rapidly passed by. The interest has grown and multiplied until a larger building is needed. The pastor appointed a building committee to consider the erection of a new building. The committee consulted an architect who drew some practical plans. The plans were presented to the congregation. After some alterations the plans were accepted. Rev. Noble asked the church to kindly dismiss the building committee with thanks. He felt that the plans could be better worked out by himself and the build-

ing contractor than for too many to participate. The church very graciously complied with his wishes. In less than ninety days the building had actually begun. The building was to be erected with solid brick with adequate Sunday school rooms and a spacious auditorium. It took six months of wise planning and ardent labor to complete the building. The pastor and his able assistants raised nearly five thousand dollars among the business men of the city for the new structure. The opening day in the church was one of spiritual power and blessing. Rev. Noble had secured one of the General Superintendents to preach the opening sermon. The Sunday school attendance on this occasion was eight hundred and twenty-five, and the spacious auditorium was packed to the doors with interested people. On this occasion a large sum of money was raised to put new pews in the building. The pastor was very careful not to overload his congregation with a big debt. After all local bills were paid on the building, the church owed only nine thousand dollars.

Some few weeks after the opening service in the new building an unusual thing happened in the Park Center congregation. Rev. George was an elder in this church. He got mixed up with another member of this church. In the mix-up Rev. George was critically shot and lay in the local hospital for weeks. But through medical skill and the prayers of the saints his life was spared. It looked as if the accomplishments of the past years would come to naught.

But the pastor used rare judgment and the matter was worked out without losing anything. Reconciliation was brought about between the two brethren. The congregation was beautifully united again. This was a new test to Rev. Noble, but he stood up under the test like a veteran.

The membership of the Park Center congregation had now grown to the second largest in the state, and the Sunday school was without question the largest in the state. The building was packed to the doors every Sabbath. There were more than thirty professions in one month in the regular services. The Sunday school attendance was now three hundred and fifty every Sunday. Its various departments were well organized. The Woman's Missionary Society had grown beyond human expectations. This splendid organization was paying quite a sum each month on the new building, and some twenty-five dollars a month

on the General Budget. The N. Y. P. S. had grown from a discouraged band of ten to a membership of one hundred. The young people were helping pay the District Budget. Rev. Noble had gone with his young people on outings, and played with them, chummed with them, sympathized with them and prayed and wept over them until he had led them to Jesus Christ. This crowd of youngsters did not believe there was another preacher on earth like theirs. They were spiritual and happy. When an invitation was given for people to come to the altar they streamed into the congregation and gathered out the unsaved and led them to the Lord. Once when a revival was in progress in this church a number of this group brought a young man to the altar while the evening offering was being taken. They prayed him through to victory and it did not interfere with the offering.

Rev. Noble was nearing the close of his fifth year in Park Center. He had received a number of invitations to other churches. He all but accepted one in another state. But his people pulled on him with such devotion that he declined the call. The membership of his church had grown to two hundred and fifty. Every department was well organized. All financial obligations were paid each month. The pastor's salary had been doubled in five years. The District and General Budgets were also doubled.

The success of Rev. Noble in Park Center was no mere accident. It was no mere streak of luck. In the first place he was a man who loved people. Some people called him "the warm hearted parson." This young man literally lived with his people in their sorrows and in their joys. He devoted his afternoons to visiting. He visited his people and the outside friends of the church. Yes, he was a congenial man to work with. He was not contentious, but was easily entreated. He was a pastor who refused to let things come to an issue in his church. He was a man of vision. He saw difficulties before they arrived. He was that type of humanity who could freely mix with his people and not lose his dignity. He did not permit himself to be mixed-up in little things. He was a great fellow to overlook the faults and shortcomings of his people. He was deeply spiritual. He spent much time in prayer and the reading of the Bible. In fact he never neglected his devotional life. He had a burning passion for the lost. He was intensely evangelistic. He had a

burden for souls. He preached for results. He was a strong preacher and a devout student. The pulpit was the throne of his power. When people listened to him they went away with something to think about. He had a knack of knowing the secrets of men's hearts. He knew how to approach people about salvation. He was a capable leader. And the people were not afraid of his leadership. He was a careful financier. He was not a plunger. He looked well after his own obligations. He did not live above his income.

Yes, he had excellent judgment. He was a man who could hold his equilibrium in crises. He did not go to pieces when things were going wrong. When others were losing their balance and poise he was cool and deliberate. He was neat in his attire, and winsome in his manners. He was courteous in his attitude toward others. He was a capable executive. He had three faces. He had one face in the board meeting, another face in the preaching services, and still another in social fellowship gatherings. He was a stayer—a plodder. Yet he was intensely enthusiastic in performing his duties. He had deep-seated convictions, but was not hard-headed. He was a firm believer in the glorious fundamentals of Christianity, but was tender and compassionate. He knew the secret of getting along with people. He succeeded in Jacksonville, but it did not puff him up. He did not go to Park Center to thrive on past experiences. He did not embarrass his Park Center congregation with a weekly relating of how things were done in Jacksonville.

Then he had a real preacher's wife. She was a capable leader, but seldom ever led. She was unassuming and retiring in disposition. She was profoundly interested in the progress of the church, but said little about how things should be run. She loved the Lord and did her best to make the parsonage a real place to live. She was a neat housekeeper. She busied herself in creating a right atmosphere in the parsonage. She was "a power behind the throne." She felt it her biggest duty to strengthen the hands of her husband. She was not bossy among the people. Her husband had no broken fellowship to mend because of her bad judgment. The sisters of the church were constantly seeking her advice in difficult matters. She was a booster, but not a dictator. She was the smiling and sympathetic woman of the manse.

Rev. Noble was also loyal to his denomination

and its program. He paid the budgets and all the claims of the church. His preaching was with unction and power. When he preached the people felt it. They felt the thrill of God's message and the glow of his warm heart. He absolutely put his soul into the message of God. He preached for results. And the people were moved to action. He had the power of adaptability. He knew how to adjust himself to bad situations. He was at home with both rich and poor. He did not believe that the pulpit was the place to get back at people. He did not gather the unpleasant things during the week and then pour them upon his people on Sunday morning. He refused to cross people until he had to do so. He agreed with people in nonessentials in order to get them to co-operate with him in essentials. He was not touchy and easy to get his feelings hurt. He was not easily discouraged—he was tremendously optimistic. When he did a thing for God you could feel him. He was a weeping prophet. He always kept a larger task before his people than they could accomplish. He did not permit his duties to drive him to action, but he pushed his duties. He was a great director, but not a dictator. He put others to work. He did not try to fill every office in the church. He was an organizer.

The pastor and his people were rounding out the fifth year's work. Thousands of dollars had been raised during the year. The District and General Budgets were paid in full; pastor's salary and all local obligations were also paid up. The pastor had been recalled for the sixth year. Delegates had been elected to the coming assembly in Hollow Rock. Fifty new members had been received into the church during the year. Every department was functioning beautifully. Unity and harmony prevailed among the members, and souls were praying through in the regular services. Upon arriving at the seat of the assembly Rev. Noble was asked to consider the District Superintendency of his district. Of course he had given the matter no consideration before coming to the assembly. He told the brethren that if they wanted him he was the servant of the people. On Friday morning when the vote was taken for a Superintendent he received the second highest vote, and on the next ballot he was very graciously elected. He accepted the new position with a tear-stained face. He took the leadership of a large district in membership and possibilities. Our

friend begins this new line of work with the same faith and determination that he did in the pastorate.

ASHLAND, KENTUCKY

ORDINATION SERMON

A message given by Rev. P. Wiseman on the occasion of the ordination of five men to the Christian ministry.

THERE are many inspirational and appropriate passages of scripture for ordination messages. Take, for instance, the scripture reading this morning, Acts 20: 17-38. There are many good texts in this reading. But after praying a good deal over this service, my mind was taken back to a passage of scripture that was used two years ago, if I mistake not, for the basis of the morning message. Not having had any notes on paper we are not able to recall just now what was said on the subject. In spite of the fact, however, that we cannot recall using the passage in mind on that occasion, the Spirit, we feel, would not have us settle on any other for this morning.

The scripture in mind is recorded in Mark, chapter three, verses thirteen and fourteen, "And he goeth up into a mountain and calleth unto him whom he would; and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach."

THE NEED

By way of introduction it might be suggested that there is in the background a need; that is, a need for the Christian ministry. The question might be asked, "Why did Jesus the Lord need a Christian ministry?" In answering we might recall the words of Dr. Gordon in one of his books. The story is that after Jesus ascended to heaven, He took a walk one morning with Gabriel. "Master," said Gabriel; "did you really become man and die on the cross of Calvary for the whole world?" "Yes, Gabriel." "What provision, Master, didst Thou make for the carrying on of this work?" The Master is said to have replied, "I called a few fishermen, a tax-gatherer, and others from various vocations in life, saved them, taught them; sent my Spirit upon them, and sent them out to carry on the work." Then Gabriel said to Jesus, "But, Master, if they should fail, hast Thou made any other provision?" "Gabriel," replied the Master, "I have

made no other provision. I am counting on them."

The suggestion here is that Christ, shortly after entering upon His earthly career, was brought to realize the need of a band of men who would sit at His feet and learn of Him; men who would afterward carry on the work that He had made possible. We are well aware of the fact that the Holy Spirit in a very real way took the place of Jesus, but there is also a real sense in which Jesus needed a ministry that should imbibe His Spirit and ideals and should carry on the work that He made possible while in the flesh. The great need was evident, hence the call and ordination.

THE SECRET

There is also suggested in the background the secret of the wonderful life, the ideal life. The secret is found in prayer: I am glad for that selection in song this morning, "Ever Will I Pray." If we are to be an efficient Christian ministry we must live on our knees, that is, live in the spirit of prayer, independent of the posture of the body for that matter. We must walk and talk with the King. If we do there is no danger of failure. There may be mistakes, but God will overrule for our good and for His glory. There is no doubt regarding the ultimate outcome of the Christian ministry if the prayer life is kept up. We have that wonderful secret, "He went up into a mountain alone." He spent many nights there alone with God, the Father. When there was some great responsibility bearing in upon Him He made His way to the mountains, "Alone with God," and if the great Master, our Christ and Savior, had need for this aloneness with God, how much do we in the crushing problems and the challenging difficulties which come in our labors, whether as pastors, evangelists or in any other office in the ministry?

THE CALL

As to the message proper, we have first of all, the call. "He called unto him whom he would."

The call to the ministry is divine and human. God called whom He would. It is the prerogative of God to call. "No man taketh this honour unto himself but he that is called of God as was Aaron." We cannot choose it because we may desire such a vocation. Bishop Simpson puts it very nicely when he says that a man may desire to enter upon a medical career; he may wish to be a lawyer; and so on; but if he has the call of God upon him, he feels that he must

be a minister. That imperative "must" bears upon him. With him it is not so much a matter of choice, but a matter of divine imperative. God in His own wisdom has placed His hand upon him for the work of the ministry. The inward argument is, "I must preach the gospel." He may argue against it, and around it, but ultimately, there is the conclusive urge within, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel."

THE ORDINATION

Then follows the sacred ordination performed by Jesus Christ himself. There is a sense in which that same sacredness is needed today, and if we enter this sacred calling and ordination in the same spirit as did the early primitive ministers, God will put the same sanction upon it as He did in the long ago.

THE HUMAN TOUCH

There follows that call and ordination what might be termed "the human touch." He called them and ordained them "that they might be with him." There is a pathetic touch here. He wanted some to be with Him. With all due consideration of His deity and of His ability to meet the crushing circumstances and the great difficulties that He did meet in His ministry, we find that during that ministry He sought for the human touch, human sympathy. You will recall that in the garden He took with Him three a little nearer. "Could you not watch with me one hour?" was His gentle reproof, and it spoke of His desire for co-operation and sympathy. Thus it appears very clear from the context that it was not solely a matter of their spiritual uplift, but there was a need from His standpoint. He desired their fellowship, their co-operation, and any human sympathy that they might be able to give during this time when His precious body, which had never known physical disease, became so crushed by the pressure of redemption that every pore in it became an open wound and forthwith came sweat as it were drops of blood falling down to the ground. No human mind can conceive of the physical, mental, and spiritual agony of Christ in Gethsemane. He wanted some persons to be with Him. Brethren, there is the ministry of intercession.

THE PREPARATION

"That they might be with him, and that he might send them forth."

There is here the idea of association, impartation and proclamation. Association led to impartation. He imparted to them of His very self.

They saw what He did, heard what He said, and felt the touch of the Almighty Christ. They received of Him, and thus were qualified to go out and proclaim Him; a proclamation by word and by radiation, showing the Christlikeness. One might suggest the order here, association, impartation, assimilation and proclamation.

Christ is the Teacher, "Learn of me," and He is the lesson, "I am the truth." "Learned Christ." He is the teacher. He is the truth. He is the lesson. "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." "As the truth is in Jesus," and for its application we must finish the verse, "that ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt, and put on the new man."

I want to say, friends, that Jesus Christ put emphasis where it belonged. There are a lot of things not mentioned in His teaching, because they are included in other things. They had that blessed association with the Master under trial that gave them qualification for the trials that afterward would come in their lives. When a minister has gone through the mill, the mill of trial, he can help others. They would see the Spirit, the Master exhibited in temptation and misrepresentation. They would receive of Him, and be thus qualified to exhibit the same spirit under similar circumstances.

They thus received an education that could not be received in any other way.

Beloved ministry, we have to be with Him before we can go out to talk about Him. We have to hear His words, see His doings, and feel His touch. It is an alarming fact that there are scores of young men going out into the ministry without this. One cannot get this in college degrees. With all due respect to that aspect of a minister's qualifications; and although such a preparation is necessary and beneficial, there is a personal instruction from Christ, by association, observation and receiving from Him through the Spirit, without which we are absolutely helpless in our ministry. We want the best standing educationally. We want the best spiritually, splendid educational attainments with the deepest spirituality is the glorious combination we should desire.

THE PROCLAMATION

"That he might send them forth to preach."

It might be suggested that we are sent out to proclaim a theme. We can be true to that theme after being with Him, and associating with Him.

There are many subjects for Christian preaching, but one theme, and it is found in the words of Paul, "We preach Christ crucified," the Person and the cross. Whether touching the home, the political, the national aspect, or any other problem on which a preacher may be duty bound to deal, they all center in the one theme; Christ and the cross. He is the solution. Paul knew that very well for he brought all problems to the Christ and the cross.

Our theme then, brethren, is the Redeemer; one Man who died for us; one blood that is efficacious; one sacrifice that is equal to the needs of humanity; "Christ crucified." We are not called to trifle with incidentals. We are called to emphasize the Person and His accomplishments. It is more or less useless for a man to harp even at modernism. We are to exalt the wonderful Christ, and get people ready to live, ready to serve, ready to suffer, ready for the trumpet's call at any moment.

The source of the message we are called to proclaim is the Word. We have the living Word, the Christ; and we have the written word, the Bible. You cannot separate them without a tragedy. One of the notable failures of the day is an endeavor to separate the written Word from the living Word. The living Christ and all His accomplishments run as a scarlet thread through the written Word. That means life. One of the avenues by which we might be filled with the Word is to know the living Word. We have to be filled with the heavenly manna to preach the glorious message of God and to bless this twentieth century with the apostolic gospel.

With regard to the message, it might be suggestive to say that Paul's commission has that outlined very beautifully. His parchment reads, First, "To open their eyes." Secondly, "To turn them from darkness to light." Thirdly, "From the power of Satan unto God." Fourthly, "That they may receive forgiveness of sins." Fifthly, "An inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

Paul received this commission not from men but from the Lord. The first theological seminary he attended after his conversion was the Arabian desert. The Lord was President of that seminary and the Holy Spirit the Instructor.

Brethren, we are up against stone blindness today. There are people right in our midst and over our land who know no more about the gospel than men and women in Central Africa.

By burning logic, a godly life, and the sword of the Spirit that cuts both ways; by such a qualification we can carry out the commission outlined by Paul. Brethren, we can by God's help do it. If the devil tells you you cannot, he is a liar. God who has called us will equip us for the job.

As to the *illustration* of the message proclaimed, well, that depends upon the preacher himself. If he is Christlike he will be a good illustration. If he is not, he might as well quit.

Here is the order: God called, God qualified, God sent, God used, God honored. Though the Church may be the human avenue it is all of God. Oh, it is so nice, brethren, for us to individually feel, and be able to say, "God has called me, ordained me, fitted me to preach the gospel. God has brought me into contact with the greatest Teacher that ever graced the earth; has imparted to me full salvation; given to me the great Executive in the Godhead; has placed His sacred hand upon me in ordination."

Is that the way you feel? With that blessed consciousness we shall look beyond the difficulties, and realize that God is with us. A man said, "I have put so many years in the church, and now I am without a church." That is sad, I grant, but there should be a conscious standing before God that the years have been put in for Him. Should we find ourselves without a church home, that is, speaking of that branch of the Church militant to which we might be affiliated, we are in the mystic body, spiritual and bound for the Church triumphant. Bless the Lord! We shall have a good society up there when we are through here.

Let us be true to God. Brethren, to be used of God is the greatest honor that can come to any man. It is not, after all, a matter of what people may think and say; it is a matter of what God thinks about us. It is so restful to have His approbation.

Then there is that blessed approbation which arises from the fact that you have helped some person. You may have to forget your own weariness in order to help someone else. You may have to forget your own headaches and heartaches and take the burden of some weary soul and bless him and do it as though you had no burden at all yourself; but He who sees and knows will give you the satisfaction of knowing that you have been used by Him. When Mrs. Wm. Booth, wife of the founder of the Salvation

Army, (in fact she is said to have been the founder) died, people from every phase of society walked by her casket with tears. They were heard to say, "Through the instrumentality of that godly woman, I was led to Christ." It has been said that she was never a moment without suffering in her last years, but she labored on for souls, often it is said, arising from her bed, dressing, going and preaching to some gathering. Then return and retire in pain. Brethren, there are discouraging fields of labor and the devil will try to discourage you before you start; but go forward in God's name. The fact of a Christlike man taking up his residence in any locality will speak volumes. God alone knows what it will mean if you will be true.

I read the ordination vows over again this morning! "If any member thereof do take any hurt or hindrance by reason of your negligence, ye know the greatness of the fault, and also the horrible punishment that will ensue."

Then the prayer for that divine qualification. "The Lord pour upon thee the Holy Ghost for the office of a minister in the Church of Christ, and be thou a faithful dispenser of the same in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

Let us have this morning a personal preparation, a personal qualification for the great work to which God has called us. You, brethren, who are to be ordained this morning, exalt the Christ, exalt the blood, exalt Calvary's accomplishments, honor the Holy Ghost, be optimistic, and God will give you a wonderful ministry even in this twentieth century.

Let us pray.

"The financial effort of the Church has been too often an attempt to realize a coin crop from those who are not interested in bearing any kind of religious fruit, 'religious money' above all things. Consequently it is, with struggle and with toil that a bare existence is eked out. But the cultivation of the soil first, the addition of certain elements to the ground necessary for growth will produce far greater harvests than all other agitations. A tree without fruit yields nothing, no matter how vigorously it is shaken."
—HERBERT A. BOSCH.

"Thou hast made us for Thyself, and the heart knows no rest till it rests in Thee."—AUGUSTINE.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF DR. A. M. HILLS

(A few weeks ago I received a letter from Neal C. Dirks, of Pasadena, California, saying he had interviewed D. A. M. Hills regarding some material required for a treatise used in class work at Pasadena College, and offering to send his treatise for the Preacher's Magazine. This offer was much appreciated and was immediately accepted. Doctor Hills has been a great biographer, but has said almost nothing about himself. Our only regret concerning the present sketch is that it is so brief.—EDITOR).

AARON MERRIT HILLS fondly treasures the memory of a scrap of faded blue paper, sealed in an envelope with small red sealing wafers. This slip of paper explains to a certain extent the reason of his exceptional career. The story concerns his youth. When but a tot of three, Aaron's mother became seriously ill, and remained so for approximately six months. During this time her life was often despaired of. While passing through one of these seasons, she called her son, Aaron, to her bedside and gave him an old worn Bible containing a sealed letter which he was to open and read on his tenth birthday. While Mother Hills was sick, Aaron was turned over to an ignorant maid who knew nothing about the caring for and rearing of children. Due to her carelessness, Aaron's entire body was cancered. His glottis was completely eaten away; his bowels, stomach and intestinal tract were all infected. For a short time it appeared as though fate was about to snuff out his young life. However, he finally recovered and suffered no serious effects.

A few months before his tenth birthday Aaron brought down the treasured volume his mother had given him and took out the letter. With trembling hands he broke the seal and slipped out the little blue scrap of paper. Nervously he unfolded the letter (which is now lost). In substance, it read as follows:

"My Dear Son Aaron Merrit:

"In God's name I dedicate you to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. May God's richest blessings follow you and make you a soul-winner.

"Your loving mother."

When interviewed for the above story, Aaron Hills, in referring to his illness at the time he received the letter, remarked, "You see, the devil could read! He knew what was inside that letter

and he tried to kill me when I was only three years old! But God didn't let him!"

Dr. Hills' life only too well announces the devil's defeat. Not only has his life blessed thousands of others, but today he has out-lived his brother and three sisters. Nearing his eighty-fifth birthday, he says, "I feel like the war-horses of Job, pawing for battle."

The heredity of Aaron Merrit Hills may be traced back to the first Hills in America. About three hundred years ago William Sanford Hills landed in Boston with the early settlers. He moved to a place a few miles outside of what now is Hartford, Connecticut. William Sanford Hills was Aaron's great-great-great-great-grandfather, or, in other words, Aaron is a member of the eighth generation. In the volume entitled "The Hills Family in America," he appears as number 1536.

His father's father was a Congregational deacon and was rather a pious man. His mother's father was less pious. When he was only thirty-nine years old, he became seriously ill. A young doctor, a quack, was summoned. He diagnosed his patient after a sort and remarked, "I'll give him something that will either kill him or cure him!" It did! The doctor gave his patient a dose of quicksilver and in five minutes he was dead. Just before his spirit slipped away, he threw up his hands and cried out in despair, "Thirty-nine years I neglected Christ, now one ray of hope would be worth a thousand worlds!"

Aaron's father, Henry Cleveland Hills, born in Bristol, New York, was a close relative of President Cleveland.

His mother was a Chesbrow. She was a school teacher, having been educated by her uncle. The Chesbrows were also a family of traditions. An S. K. J. Chesbrow was one of the early founders of Free Methodism. He headed the publishing house for a number of years. An uncle of Aaron's mother was a civil engineer who laid the first railroad in the United States.

Aaron Merrit Hills was ushered into this world on a cool, brisk day in February. He was born in Dowagiac, Cass County, Michigan, on February 4, 1848, the same year the Michigan Central Railroad came through Dowagiac. The builder of that railroad boarded at Aaron's home while it was being built.

When Aaron was only six weeks old, the main street of Dowagiac was opened. He, sitting upon

his father's lap, was one of the first ones to ride through that street. The town grew rapidly and schools and churches were erected. The Hills family lived in Dowagiac until Aaron's eighteenth year. He obtained his grammar school education and the first three years of high school there.

During his eleventh year a great event took place in Aaron's life. Though both his parents were Congregationalists, they were not so narrow-minded as to be unwilling to attend a church of another denomination. A revival was being held in a nearby Baptist church and the Hills family went to hear the preacher. The evangelist was truly a man of God, preaching the gospel clearly, simply and convictingly. Aaron had attended only a few evenings when he began to sense a strange feeling steal over his heart. He yearned to give his heart to Jesus Christ. He longed for forgiveness. So, forthwith, he made his way to the altar one night and found Jesus as his Savior. Then, more than ever, was he determined to carry out the desire and prayer of his mother.

When he had reached his eighteenth year, Aaron's family moved to Mt. Vernon, Ohio. There he graduated from high school the following year.

In 1867 Aaron entered Oberlin College. This step has since proved to be the turning point of his life. While in Oberlin he heard for the first time an intelligent presentation of the experience of holiness. The preaching of the mighty Finney planted seeds in his heart which grew and budded in later years.

His contacts while at Oberlin were many and varied. He met many men who since have become national figures. Though many were the glowing fields that tempted him, he remained constant and true to the message of the blue letter. He never wavered in his determination to become a soul-winner. He graduated from Oberlin in 1871; then he entered Yale for post-graduate work. He graduated from Yale in 1874.

A year before his graduation from Yale Aaron received his first call to a pastorate. He was called to Ravenna to preach during the summer months and if the church was pleased with him he would be given the pastorate for as long as he cared to keep it. The three summer months were filled with many glowing services. At the end of the summer he was given a unanimous call to return immediately after graduating from Yale.

This he did, receiving \$1,800 a year for his first pastorate. The church was fifty years old when he came to it, and during the ten years he remained the membership was practically doubled. He held revivals in the surrounding churches and kept one going all the time in his own church. During these ten years Aaron was enabled to win about five hundred and fifty souls to Christ. We must remember that he was not yet sanctified.

At the end of ten years, he accepted a call to a pastorate in Pittsburgh, Pa., which he held for six years. From this church he went to Olivet College church. His pastorate there was a short and unpleasant one.

Two college professors had been aspiring for this pastorate as a stepping-stone to the presidency of the college. When Aaron came they said, "He shall not succeed!" These men fought him until the end of eighteen months. Then a church meeting was called. Ninety per cent voted for Aaron to remain, but the other ten per cent were so decidedly against him that he felt it better to leave. This he did. He then entered the general evangelistic field, carrying on in this capacity for about five years.

The power of Finney's preaching had been following him all this time. In December, 1897, Aaron could resist the wooings of the Spirit no longer. He consecrated his all and became sanctified wholly. With this experience came the real turning point of his life. His greatest usefulness was yet to be realized. Within fourteen weeks of his sanctification, even though he was preaching about fourteen times a week, he wrote his monumental work, "Holiness and Power." Following the publishing of this book he was called to the Professorship of Theology at Asbury College. He occupied this chair for one year.

In 1899 he was called to the presidency of the Texas Holiness University. At that time it was a small, struggling institution of only twenty-eight members. During the seven years which he held the presidency he built the school to a student body of three hundred and sixty-four and had three fine buildings erected.

From Texas he went to Oskaloosa, Iowa, to foster another struggling college. This institution he built from practically nothing to a student body of four hundred and one. From Iowa Professor Hills was called to the presidency of Olivet College, Olivet, Ill. At the end of a year he left

to build a school in Elida, New Mexico. Due to lack of support, the venture failed.

Bethany, Oklahoma, had been clamoring for Dr. Hills for some time, so he went there to teach. While he was at Bethany, Dr. Bresee came to hold the assembly for that district. After Dr. Bresee had listened to him a few times, he went to him and said, "Brother Hills, I'll not ask you to join us, but if you do, I'll welcome you with open arms!" His answer was, "The Congregational church is on probation. If she will not accept me with my holiness, I'll leave!" A few months later Dr. Hills became a Nazarene.

After a year of teaching at Bethany Dr. Hills received an urgent call to come to England. He went and was invited back again. In all he spent four years in England, during which time he won about four thousand souls and published six books.

Returning from England, he received a call to come and teach at Pasadena College. Here he labors today.

In a few weeks Dr. Hills will be eighty-five years old. He is still as spry as some men at forty. His memory is a miracle. His accomplishments are phenomenal. He has won sixteen thousand souls to Christ; trained eight hundred ministers, missionaries, and Christian workers; written thirty-five books and two thousand and fifty-two articles for the Christian press.

When asked what he considered to be the greatest accomplishment of his life, he answered without a moment's hesitation, "I believe time will show my 'Christian Theology' to be my greatest work."

Dr. Hills has been an evangelist, pastor, writer, teacher, traveler and college professor. Today he carries on in the capacity of college professor, teaching Christian Doctrine, Homiletics and Greek.

We would count a man most impractical who would refuse to enter into the rich blessings which come out of his faithful cultivation of the soil because he does not understand all the mysteries connected with the unfolding experiences in his work. He has seen the result of agriculture and at once believes he will secure the same result if he shall meet the very same conditions. This is exactly what a man does, if he really desires a spiritual harvest. Too many do not really desire the spiritual growth, for they see

that fruit-bearing will mean cultivation and pruning; therefore they make the unscientific and insincere excuse for not doing their plain part that they do not understand it all. The work of a man who prays is as clear in its nature and results as the work of a man who plows. In both cases alike man's fidelity or failure will have much to do with his possession of God's blessings. God's promise is clear both in nature and in character. The facts are here to prove that as men enter into the fullness of the prayer life, they are as surely blessed as when they enter into the farm life. Every honest man must hold to the side of the facts and make the most of them, waiting for light upon mysteries.—H. A. JOHNSTON.

PREACHER'S MAGAZINE COMMENDED

I am herewith enclosing you a check for two dollars for my own subscription and for somebody else's. I know it is a struggle to keep this magazine going, but there is no one thing that the Publishing House is doing that is of greater worth to our preachers than putting out this magazine.—E. O. CHALFANT, Ill.

Keep on with the excellent work of the Magazine. I fairly "ache" between copies—they have been a great blessing to me.—NEAL C. DIRKSE, Calif.

In a personal letter in which he says he and his church are 100% behind the Sacrifice Offering and all the program of the denomination, Dr. Henricks, pastor of our First church in Sacramento, Calif., gave me a brief account of his pastoral activities. He and his church set off for themselves the task of visiting every home within a radius of ten blocks of the church to invite people to the revival in which the pastor himself was the evangelist. There are about four hundred blocks within the territory, and in carrying out the plan, Dr. Henricks himself visited over 1,000 homes. While making these visits, 5,000 bulletins, 1,500 cards, 1,000 copies of the Herald of Holiness, 1,000 "Prohibition at the Cross Roads," and 1,000 "What the Church of the Nazarene Is and What It Stands For" were distributed. This is, I suspect, a banner pastoral calling record, and it is bringing results in increased attendance and the ingathering of souls and members for the church.